

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
22/01324/ADV	Jake Powell	20/12/2022

Address: Land At Hollin Lane, Middleton, M24 5EE

Proposal: Replacement of two advertising boards for one double sided internally illuminated digital poster panel.

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?	N
	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

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

RECOMMENDATION	REFUSE
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RK

DATE: 21/12/2022

SITE

The application relates to an area of land situated on Hollin Lane, in close proximity to the junction with Rochdale Road. Three advertisement hoardings are currently situated on site, one facing north down Hollin Lane, and two facing the junction with Rochdale Road. All of these hoardings are non-illuminated.

The site is within the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area. To the southeast of the site is the White Hart Public House, 86 Rochdale Road, which is considered a Non-Designated Heritage Asset. To the rear of the site is the Middleton Cricket Club. This historic area of open space and its associated pavilion, which is also an NDHA, are heavily screened from the site by mature landscaping.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks permission for the three existing advertising hoardings, and the replacement with one double sided LED screen mounted on a full width stand, facing towards Manchester Street.

The screens would measure 6.3 metres in width and 3.3 metres in height and would be raised above ground level by 2 metres.

The application form indicates that the screen would display static advertisements, and the screen would have a maximum illuminance of 300 cd/m². No further information has been given.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – July 2021

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

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

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1	Defined Urban Area
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RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

No relevant site history.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways

Highways do have some concerns regarding the positioning of the illuminated signage and its proximity to the signalised junction.

Our concerns relate to the potential distraction of drivers approaching the signals and the effect that the changing illumination on the signage would create.

Although the site has an established advertisement hoarding on it and the proposed signs are slightly set back we would prefer that the signage does not display any moving images, animation, flashing, scrolling or video and no visual effects including fading, swiping or animation shall accompany the transition between any successive advertisements, images or messages.

We would also ask that the advertisements, images or messages displayed on the digital panel shall not change more than once every 10 seconds.

If the suggested conditions could be applied Highways would raise no objection to the application.

Conservation

The application site lies on the corner of Hollin Lane and Rochdale Road and is within the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area. To the southeast of the site is the White Hart Public House, 86 Rochdale Road. This attractive red brick, three storey building is a prominent feature on the corner, originally built in the 18th century, it underwent extensive rebuilding works in the 20th century. Nevertheless, it retains some architectural and historic interest and has been identified as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA).

To the rear of the site is the Middleton Cricket Club. This historic area of open space and its associated pavilion, which is also an NDHA, are heavily screened from the site by mature landscaping.

There are currently three non-illuminated billboard signs on the site. There is no planning history for the existing adverts, but they would appear to have been in-situ since at least 2008.

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 in the same location as one of the existing signs. The proposed signs would have overall dimensions of 6m by 3m and would be set off the ground by 1.95m. 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 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 visual amenity.

Similar to the existing signs, the proposed sign would be visible in longer range views of the White Hart Public House. Given the distance of separation and the existing context, it is not considered that this would be so far harmful to the setting of the NDHA as to warrant a refusal on visual amenity grounds. It is also noted that the proposed development would see the overall number and area covered by signs reduced.

Given the above, and subject to a condition restricting the luminance levels of the signs, it is considered that the proposal would on balance preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

There are no heritage objections to the proposal.

Environmental Health

No comments to date.

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with the Council's adopted code of practice for advertisement applications, no direct publicity was issued.

ANALYSIS

Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets: P2, P3, DM1 and NPPF

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. Policy P2 seeks to conserve, enhance and promote key heritage assets and utilise heritage assets positively and intelligently to strengthen identity and image.

The application site is located within the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, and is in close proximity to the White Hart Public House, 86 Rochdale Road. This is an attractive red brick, three storey building is a prominent feature on the corner, originally built in the 18th century, it underwent extensive rebuilding works in the 20th century. Nevertheless, it retains some architectural and historic interest and has been identified as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA).

The proposed signage would be visible in longer range views of the Whit Hart Public House. However, given the distance of separation, the existing advertisements, and that the application will reduce the number of signs on site, Officers consider that the proposed advertisements would not be significant harmful to the setting of the non-designated heritage asset to warrant refusal.

Whilst the signage displayed already in place at the site is recognised not to have formal consent, it is noted that the locality of the site exhibits a range of signage, including the advertising hoardings on site, as well as fascia signs for multiple commercial/retail uses. As such the introduction of advertising signage on the site would not be seen to be out of character. The proposal details the installation of signage which would feature digital LED lighting which would bring a different dimension to the area. However, it is considered that, on balance, the signage scheme in this particular location would not appear unacceptably dominant or lead to an excessive clutter of the street scene.

Given the nature and location of the site, and the mix of uses within the surrounding area, it is considered the proposed digital screen would be result in no adverse impact to the character and appearance of the area or nearby heritage assets, subject to a condition limiting levels of illuminance.

However, the proposed signage would be sited in close proximity to residential properties, particularly nos.81 and 83 Rochdale Road. These neighbouring properties have habitable room windows which would have a clear view of the proposed development. Given the close proximity of the adjacent homes, and the illuminated nature of the signage it is considered that the proposed advertising hoardings are likely to give rise to complaints of light nuisance and general disturbance. The obtrusive appearance of the signage when viewed from the nearest properties on the junction of Rochdale Rd/Hollin Lane would appear incongruous from the first floor rear facing windows of these properties and would unduly impact their outlook, particularly during the hours of darkness. Therefore it is considered that the proposed development would result in an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in conflict with Policies P3 and DM1 of the Rochdale Core Strategy and the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Public Safety: P3, T2 and NPPF

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.

The application has been reviewed by a Council Highways Officer, who raised some concerns to the proposed advertisement.

These concerns were related to the proximity of the proposed illuminated signage to the signalised junction, and the potential for the development to result in a distraction of drivers approaching the signals and the effect that the changing illumination on the signage would create.

Nevertheless, it was considered that these concerns could be overcome by a suitably worded condition to limit the transition of advertisements to no more than once every 10 seconds, and to ensure that the signage does not display any moving images, animation, flashing, scrolling or video and no visual effects including fading, swiping or animation shall accompany the transition between any successive advertisements, images or messages.

With these conditions in mind, 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

REFUSAL for the following reason:

1. By reason of its siting, design and illuminance, the proposed illuminated digital advertising panels would have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of the occupiers of the residential properties on Hollin Lane as a result of light nuisance and general disturbance. Additionally, by reason of the proximity and orientation of the signage, the hoardings would appear incongruous within views from the rear facing habitable rooms at upper floor level, and would unduly harm the outlook which existing occupiers currently benefit from, contrary to the residential amenity aims of policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Notes for Applicant:

For the avoidance of doubt, this decision relates to the following list of plans:

15615/PA/01 – Location Plan

15615/PA/02 – Existing Site Plan

15615/PA/03 – Proposed Site Plan

15615/PA/04 – Existing Elevations

15615/PA/05 – Proposed Elevations

Report Author Jake Powell