

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.

24/00415/ADV

CASE OFFICER

Michael Atkinson-Smith

DETERMINATION DATE 18.07.2024 **EXT OF TIME**

Address: Pavement Opposite 8-10 South Parade Rochdale OL16 1LR

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 site lies within the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area and is within the setting of a number of listed buildings including the former Union Bank of Manchester at 5 South Parade (grade II), the former Wellington Hotel at 1 Drake Street/2 Smith Street (grade II), the former Oldham Joint Stock Bank (now HSBC) (grade II), the former Royds Bank (also known as the former Manchester and Salford Bank) at 21 The Butts (grade II) and Rochdale Bridge (grade II). The site is also within the setting of several non-designated heritage assets including 7 South Parade, 1 & 3 King Street, 1 Packer Street and 1-3 South Parade.

The public realm in the area has recently been upgraded and restored as part of the RTP1 award winning (2016) Revealing the Roch project, with further improvements made to the highway of South Parade together with significant enhancements to shopfronts and building frontages lining the south side of South Parade as part of the Rochdale Heritage Action programme.

A range of existing street furniture exists in the immediate area, including defensive architecture such as bollards, decorative planters, litter bins, lighting columns and a taxi shelter. The closest street based advertisement display is a non-illuminated six sheet board located on the pavement outside 3 South Parade.

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 on the paved area between South Parade and the Butts on the site of Rochdale Market, directly across the carriageway from the post office at nos. 9-10 South Parade and a presently unoccupied commercial unit at no. 8 South Parade that has recently secured planning permission for use a takeaway / restaurant.

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. 24/00414/FUL which is to be determined concurrently with this application.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY & LEGISLATION

Legislation

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

National Guidance

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

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
JP-P2 Heritage

Connected Places

JP-C1: An Integrated Network
JP-C2: Digital Connectivity

Greener Places

JP-G8: A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity

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
P2	Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage
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
BE/17	Development affecting conservation areas

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

N/A

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Bridges and Structures Team - No comments received to date.

Conservation Officer - [Summary]: Less than substantial harm identified to the significance of the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area and the setting of nearby listed buildings, particularly in light of the recent adoption of the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area Management Plan which includes an action to reduce street clutter.

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

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit - No comments received to date

Highways & Engineering – Objection on 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 Greater 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. 24/00414/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.

In assessing the design of the proposed signage against the legislative and policy requirements outlined above, consultation was carried out with the Council's Conservation Officer who notes that less than substantial harm has been identified to the significance of the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area and the setting of nearby listed buildings, particularly in light of the recent adoption of the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area Management Plan.

The proposed advertisement in the form of a six sheet digital LCD screen with a smaller functional screen on the opposing side of the hub unit is considered to be unduly harmful to the significance of the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area.

The Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (adopted 2011), provides the following statement of significance:

'Pevsner wrote that the area in Rochdale around the church and town hall was completely different from all English towns (1969 p373). Rochdale's fame "...is entirely connected with liberalism...and social progress" (Pevsner, N 1969 p373). Sense of space and openness not typical of industrial areas.

The provision of an 86" advertisement digital display screen in the particular location would sit strongly at odds with the substantial public investment in the wider area over recent years to preserve and enhance the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area's Civic Quarter and its setting, particularly in relation to openness, which has involved the Revealing the Roch project and transformation of Rochdale Town Hall Square. The siting of the proposed advertisement would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of a number of listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets and stand at odds against the open nature of the streetscape in this particular location.

Notable harm would also arise as a result of the visual impact of the display screen being viewed on the approach into Rochdale Town Centre eastward along The Esplanade which links various cultural institutions such as Touchstones and the Local Studies Centre alongside the main local post-16 educational establishments of Hopwood Hall College and the Rochdale V1th Form College.

On this basis, it is not considered that the proposed advertisement would comply with adopted Places for Everyone joint development plan policy JP-P2, policies DM1, P1, P2 & P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

Other matters

The Highways Authority has put forward a firm objection to the hub on the basis that its primary purpose is to provide advertising on the public highway, whereas the primary purpose of the highway is to facilitate the safe and expeditious movement of people. However, whilst the proposals would impact the pedestrian environment negatively, it is not considered there would be issues of public safety arising as a result of the proposals.

RECOMMENDATION

1. The proposed advertisement, by reason of its siting, design and illumination, would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the Rochdale Town Conservation Area through its impact on the openness of the townscape and the setting of the Grade II listed former Union Bank of

Manchester at 5 South Parade, the Grade II listed former Oldham Joint Stock Bank, the Grade II listed the former Royds Bank at 21 The Butts and the Grade II listed Rochdale Bridge, alongside the setting of additional non-designated heritage assets. This harm is not justified, mitigated, or outweighed by public benefit. On this basis, proposed development would fail to comply with adopted Places for Everyone joint development plan policies JP-P1 & JP-P2, policies DM1, P2 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

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