

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO	CASE OFFICER	DATE
24/01250/REM	Nick Brookman	15 May 2025

DETERMINATION DATE (EXTENSION OF TIME)

30 May 2025

Address: Land Bound By Manchester Road, Hareshill Road And Pilsworth Road,
West Of Junction 19 Of The M62

Proposal: Reserved matters application for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for an electricity substation including switch house, transformers and compounds pursuant to hybrid application 16/01399/HYBR.

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

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

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	GRANT subject to conditions
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RG

DATE: 29 May 2025

SITE

The application site is a rectangular piece of land located to the south of the new Queen Elizabeth II Way link road. The site is bounded to the north east by Hareshill Road and all neighbouring land immediately to the east south and west is pastureland. Land beyond Queen Elizabeth II Way is also pastureland with Heywood Distribution Park located further west / north west.

This site lies to the central western area of the wider Masterplan in an area designated on the approved land use and parameters plan (Drawing No 4846_SP(90)43 Rev Z) for a mixed use local centre comprising residential, commercial, and school uses, along with associated infrastructure including substations.

The application site currently comprises undeveloped land and one Public Right of Way (HEY FP74) runs along the northern boundary of the site.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks approval of the reserved matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale in relation to the construction of an electricity substation including a switch house, transformers and compounds pursuant to hybrid planning application 16/01399/HYBR.

The application site proposals are formed of two main elements. The first of which relates to enabling works to facilitate the proposed construction of the electricity substation which are being assessed separately under planning application 25/00014/REM. Secondly, the work directly associated with the substation which are subject to this application.

The proposed development includes the provision of 2 transformers which would be enclosed by a 2.4m high galvanised palisade fence. The transformers would be stationed in tandem adjacent to each other and would be divided by a fire separation wall (measuring approximately 5.1m tall) so each transformer would have it's own curtilage. The highest point of the transformers would measure 4.45m high. The overall area of the proposed transformers and secure perimeter fencing would measure 14.37m by 11.56m.

The proposed switch-house would be constructed of Staffordshire blue brick and slate grey roof tiles with white PVCu fascia's, soffits, barge boards and black rainwater goods. The building would measure approximately 13m x 6.7m and it would have a roof ridge height of 4.6m and an eaves height of 3.2m.

The proposed standard substation unit building will measure 3.7m x 3.1m and would have a maximum height of approximately 2.5m.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

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

Local

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

DM1 General Development requirements

SO3 Improving design, image and quality of place

P1 Improving image

P3 Improving design of new development

SO4 Promoting a greener environment

G7 Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

G8 Managing water resources and flood risk

G9 Reducing the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability

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:

JP-S1 Sustainable Development

JP-S4 Flood Risk and the Water Environment

JP-G8 A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity

JPA 1.1 Northern Gateway

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

16/01399/HYBR - Part full/part outline planning application for the development of land at South Heywood, including the demolition of a number of existing on-site buildings and structures. Full consent sought for the construction of a new link road between Junction 19 of the M62 and Pilsworth Road, the widening of part of Pilsworth Road, together with associated junction improvements, landscaping, lighting and other works including the importation of material and engineering works in order to construct the link road. Outline consent (with all matters reserved for future approval except access) sought for a major mixed-use development comprising supporting residential uses comprising up to 1000 dwellings (Class C3); employment uses (Classes B2/B8) comprising up to 135,460m² Gross Internal Area(GIA); a new primary school (Class D1); Class A1/A2/A3/A5 uses comprising up to 2500m² GIA which includes no more than 499m² of A1 uses; together with associated landscaping, open space and sports pitches, drainage, ecological enhancements, cycleway and footpath linkages, infrastructure and other works ancillary thereto. (Application accompanied by an Environmental Statement) - Approved 31 March 2020.

Other relevant planning history

25/00014/REM – Enabling works to facilitate the installation of a primary substation following the approval of planning application 16/01399/HYBR comprising of bulk earthworks, removal of inert material, diversion of surface water drains and alterations to culverts and watercourses – at the time of writing this report application 25/00014/REM is pending determination.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

United Utilities

No objection.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit

No objection.

Environment Agency

No objection.

Highways

No objection.

Lead Local Flood Authority

No comments received but the LLFA commented on the proposed enabling works application (25/00014/REM) as follows:

“The application is acceptable in principle subject to resolution of the phasing issues / requirements”.

These comments are addressed below.

Environmental Health (Noise)

No objection subject to condition requiring the submission of a Noise Impact Assessment to determine the mitigation measures required in the interest of nearby residents.

Public Rights of Way

No comments received but the PRoW Officer commented on the proposed enabling works application (25/00014/REM) as follows:

No objection as the existing PRoW HeyFp74 is to be maintained but the Council’s PRoW Officer has set out that:

- ☐ The access by the general public over the right of way whilst works are carried out, if there isn’t an order in place to temporarily remove public access this should be maintained to avoid any risks.*
- ☐ The surface of the right of way must remain undisturbed by any works, any damage to the route must be rectified immediately.*
- ☐ Water must not be directed onto the right of way, any additional maintenance required as a result of the works should be arranged by the site manager.*
- ☐ The route of the footpath should not be obstructed by vehicles, machinery or materials, vehicles should not be allowed on the route of the footpath”.*

Greater Manchester Fire Service

No comments received.

REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of notification were sent to surrounding neighbours and businesses, site notices were displayed in the vicinity of the site and a notice placed in the local press. No representations were received in relation to the application.

ANALYSIS

Principle of Development

The principle of the development has previously been established through the approval of application 16/01399/HYBR.

Nevertheless, this application is a reserved matters application for appearance, landscaping, layout, access and scale for an electricity substation including switch house, transformers and compounds pursuant to hybrid application 16/01399/HYBR.

The proposed application site is also sited within the Heywood / Pilsworth (Northern Gateway) allocated under PfE JPA 1.1 requiring significant investment in infrastructure.

The proposal would represent an early and significant investment in the infrastructure requirements of the area.

In accordance with Paragraph 7 of the NPPF, the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development, and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.

In this instance, the proposed development would provide critical infrastructure to support the South Heywood and the delivery of future development coming forward in the future.

As such, the proposal is in accordance with the relevant adopted Rochdale Core Strategy Policies, Places for Everyone Policies JP-S1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Appearance, Layout and Scale

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that *“the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve”*. Paragraph 135 goes on to state that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

Additionally, paragraph 139 sets out that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

CS Policy P1 sets out that high quality design will be required in all new developments and CS Policy C3 requires new development to adhere to high

standards of design, respecting context (scale, density, massing, height, layout). CS Policy DM1 states that all development proposals should be of a high quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area.

The development is of a functional appearance appropriate to its intended use and the extensive operational requirements of such infrastructure. Whilst functional in its design the sympathetic scale and appearance would sit comfortably with the immediately surrounding site context and the development. The proposed substation and associated paraphernalia comprising of the transformers, switch house and perimeter fencing are designed in a consistent manner with those typically used in residential and commercial settings. Importantly the infrastructure has been sited in a transitional space between the proposed local centre and the industrial commercial areas as well as the ecology and SUDs area. This siting will allow the adjacent development parcels to be appropriately designed through later reserved matters in ways which screen the substation from public vantage points by well positioned landscaping and building layouts.

The proposed perimeter fencing will be 2.4m high and coated in a green colour RAL 6005. As such, the fencing would screen a large proportion of the site and therefore, it would not be viewed as particularly incongruous or distracting. As shown by the submitted Planting Plan, a retaining wall is proposed to the east of the site parallel to the eastern boundary fence but no details have been provided of this. Accordingly, such details comprising of elevation, facing material and section details of this will be secured by condition.

The switch house and fire separation wall between the two transformers would be visible above the fence line but they are appropriately constructed of Staffordshire blue brick.

Overall, the scale of the development is not excessive and is appropriate for a development of this nature in this location. The development utilises appropriately designed materials for this location and type of development.

The layout of the development sits in a concealed manner within the proposed perimeter fencing and on assessment the proposed development layout sits securely within its curtilage and the surrounding environment.

Accordingly, subject to condition, the design of the proposal is acceptable and accords with policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, PfE and the NPPF.

Landscaping and Ecology

Core Strategy Policy G7 requires that sites and features of biodiversity and geodiversity importance are given full and appropriate recognition and protection and that opportunities for enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity will be supported. It is expected that development proposals will protect and include existing biodiversity and take opportunities to promote biodiversity and create new habitats using landscaping and building and construction features wherever possible. CS Policy G7 requires that no development should result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity.

PfE Policy JP-G8 seeks to deliver a net enhancement of biodiversity resources through a collective of measures which are broadly aligned with the approach to BNG outlined within the Environment Act (2021), the NPPF and supporting guidance documents. The provisions of the Environment Act in respect of BNG are now a statutory requirement for planning applications and so the proposed development should achieve net gains for biodiversity via species enhancement as guided by the

NPPF (paragraphs 187d and 192 b) to achieve demonstrable net gain for biodiversity.

When determining planning applications paragraph 193 of the NPPF sets out that if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused. Opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should also be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measureable net gains.

Whilst the approval of reserved matters are not within the scope of statutory biodiversity net gain as they are not themselves a grant of planning permission, the application is still subject to policies PfE Policy JP-G8 and CS Policy G7 insofar as providing a gain or enhancement in biodiversity.

In its current pre-developed state, the application site is unremarkable, the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit were consulted on this application and they have not raised any objections on ecological grounds.

From a landscaping design perspective, the east and southern boundaries of the site are screened by proposed soft landscaping which includes the planting of 236 shrubs and 264 hedgerow plants. The proposed landscaping would successfully contribute to concealing the substation from housing to the rear in an acceptable manner.

The proposed access is intended to be a temporary arrangement with the permanent access expected to come from the south east through the development of the local centre. Later applications will be required to demonstrate how the areas hosting these interim arrangements will be finished in terms of landscaping.

The application is supported by an acceptable landscaping plan and the proposed development is considered to be ecologically acceptable and it would comply with the relevant policies of the Core Strategy, PfE and the NPPF.

Access and Public Rights of Way

Policy DM1 of the CS requires that development provides satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking, manoeuvring and servicing arrangements, taking into account the proposed use and location. Rochdale Council Highways officers have reviewed the proposed development and have no objection.

Public Right of Way Hey FP74 runs along the northern boundary of the site but it would not be directly affected by the proposed development. The route is therefore to be maintained in its current location and the developer is reminded that the route of the footpath must not be obstructed by vehicles, machinery or materials and water must not be direct onto the right of way.

On the basis of the above the proposals are considered acceptable against core strategy policy T2 in terms of access and the impacts on highways and public rights of way.

OTHER ANALYSIS

Amenity

Environmental Health were consulted on this application and they have recommended the inclusion of a condition requiring the submission of a Noise Impact Assessment to determine the mitigation measures required in the interest of nearby residents. This requirement however ties in with Condition 24 of schedule 2 of the initial Hybrid Permission and thus it is not considered that a new Noise Impact Assessment would be required given the control afforded by the existing condition. Nevertheless, compliance condition 24 would be required through relevant reserved matters for residential properties which would need to account for noise impacts from the substation.

Drainage

Core Strategy Policy G8 requires that new development does not lead to any increased form of flooding locally or further downstream, does not impede natural water and flood risk management, is not detrimental to existing or potential flood storage areas, contributes where possible to alleviating existing flood risk and is itself well protected from flood risk and ensures prudent use of water resources.

Policy JP-S4 (Flood Risk and the Water Environment) of PfE expects developments to manage surface water runoff through sustainable drainage systems and development should achieve greenfield run-off rates unless it is demonstrated to be impracticable.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1, having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of flooding.

The Environment Agency were consulted on this application and have set out that they have no objection in principle to this application but they would draw the applicants attention to their comments under application 25/00014/REM concerning the proposed enabling works. These comments were:

“We would draw your attention to condition 15 (contamination) attached to 16/01399/HYBR, whereby following an appropriate assessment on contamination risks and where unacceptable risks are identified, a preferred remedial approach will be proposed and, following approval from the Local Planning Authority, implemented prior to the commencement of development (understood to be plot / phase specific). We advise this planning condition is satisfactorily addressed prior to the commencement of works and the EA’s advice sought, where required, from a ‘controlled waters’ perspective”.

The LLFA were consulted on this application and they have confirmed that the application is acceptable in principle subject to resolution of the phasing issues / requirements. In addressing the resolution, this application is for a substation that will be built and drained as a separate entity with the scheme not being linked to any phasing. The enabling works (to prepare the site for the substation) is linked and falls to planning reference 25/00014/REM. United Utilities were also consulted on this application and they raised no objection to the proposed development.

Officers therefore consider that the proposed development accords with Policy G8 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-S4 of PfE and the NPPF.

COMPLIANCE WITH OUTLINE CONDITIONS

As part of the Outline Planning Permission (16/01399/HYBR), a number of conditions are required to be submitted with Reserved Matters Applications. The scope of the

conditions which this application is required to respond to was agreed with the Case Officer in writing on 23rd April 2024.

Condition 13 – A phasing plan has been included with this application and this is acceptable.

Condition 14 – The finished floor levels have been provided within the submitted drawings accompanying this application and they are acceptable.

A number of other conditions controlling other technical aspects as well as construction and operational impacts of development are contained within Schedule 2 of 16/01399/HYBR. Any details submitted and approved under the Schedule 2 conditions attached to 16/01399/HYBR should be read alongside these Reserved Matters proposals for additional context of these technical matters.

CONCLUSIONS

It is considered that the details of the access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the proposals would provide for a development proposal that would meet the objectives of implementing the wider masterplan. The proposed development would accord with the hybrid permission parameters and the accompanying Environmental Statement. The proposals are considered to result in a sustainable form of development that would assist the wider allocation coming forward for development by providing the necessary infrastructure in this area. The development would comply with the relevant policies of the Rochdale Core Strategy, Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT, subject to the following conditions:

1. This approval relates to the following plans and documents:

- ❑ Site Location Plan Drawing No SOHW-WSP-PSS-ENAB-DR-D-0101 Rev P05.
- ❑ Construction Details for Standard G.R.P Unit Substation Drawing No ES352-A2-016/02J
- ❑ Proposed Site Layout Drawing No 100125_00032_Rev 002
- ❑ Site Elevations Drawing No 100125_00033_Rev 002
- ❑ Substation Building Plan and Elevations Drawing No 100125_00034_Rev 002
- ❑ Transformer Plans and Elevations Drawing No 100125_00035_Rev 003
- ❑ Proposed Drainage Layout Drawing No 100125_00036_Rev 001
- ❑ Planting Proposals Drawing No 136-DAC-PL-001 P1
- ❑ Illustrative Phasing Plan Drawing No SP(90)119_Rev J

and the development shall be carried out in accordance with these details hereby approved unless otherwise required by the conditions below.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with the policies contained within the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. No above ground works shall take place until full details of the proposed retaining wall as illustrated on Planting Proposals Drawing 136-DAC-PL-001 have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory standard of development and design quality in accordance with Core Strategy Policies DM1 and P3 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. All proposed planting as shown on Planting Proposals Drawing No 136-DAC-PL-001 P1 shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details within the first planting and seeding seasons following the completion of the development. Any plants, hedges or shrubs which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason: To ensure that the site is satisfactorily landscaped having regard to its location and the nature of the proposed development and in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core, Policies JP-P1 and JP-G2 of the Places for Everyone Plan and the NPPF.