

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.

24/00417/ADV

CASE OFFICER

Michael Atkinson-Smith

DETERMINATION DATE 18.07.2024 **EXT OF TIME**

Address: Pavement O/S Rochdale Interchange Smith Street Rochdale OL16 1TU

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

CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RG

DATE: 18 July 2024

SITE

The application relates to an area of the pavement that runs between the carriageway of Smith Street and the Metrolink line at its entry to the Rochdale Town Centre tram stop area. The site of the proposed installation is to the east of the existing group of planters and to the north of the existing bicycle parking facilities. Street furniture in the area is made up of the columns supporting the overhead tram power lines, street lighting columns, road & tramway signage, pedestrian guard rails, planters and litter bins.

The site lies immediately outside the boundary of the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area. The Grade II listed former Wellington Hotel stands immediately to the southwest of the site.

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. 24/00416/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
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

Conservation Officer - [Summary]: Less than substantial harm identified to the significance of the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area and the setting of the nearby Grade II listed former Wellington Hotel, 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 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.

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. 24/00416/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.

Policy P2 of the Core Strategy acknowledges that enhancing and protecting the Borough's unique character can lead to improvements in quality of life and can also help to booster the visitor economy and inward investment. It states that the Council will protect and enhance the boroughs character, including the distinctiveness of its town centres. Saved UDP policy BE/17 is also relevant to development that affects the setting a conservation area.

In assessing the impacts of the proposed development on the significance of the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area and the nearby Grade II listed former Wellington Hotel at 1 Drake Street / 2 Smith Street. The Conservation Officer notes the amount of street furniture present in the area associated with the Metrolink stop and considers that whilst the installation of the hub in this location would be seen in the context of existing street furniture, it would result in additional street clutter to exacerbate this existing issue. On this basis, the installation would result in a low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of 1 Drake Street/2 Smith Street, through inappropriate development within its setting.

Whilst the site would lie just outside of the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area, the recently adopted Management Plan for the conservation area Management Plan includes a specific action to reduce street clutter within the wider Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area, notably in respect of the public highway and around transport infrastructure.

Crucial to the determination of this application is the extant planning permission ref. 22/00445/FUL which permits a large dual fronted LCD digital advertisement display approved under application ref. 22/00446/ADV within extremely close proximity to the proposed siting. Whilst not implemented to date, this planning permission remains extant until the 14th July 2025 and therefore could be implemented at any

time. If enacted, there would be two digital display units in very close proximity within an area specifically designed to have an open feel.

The proposed installation of the advertisement in the form of the LCD screen in this location, given the context of the generally modern surroundings, is not to be considered to warrant a refusal of advertisement consent. However, were the proposed development to be installed and the previously approved digital display screen to also be installed, highly significant harm to visual amenity would arise to the immediate area through over proliferation of digital advertising screens.

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

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 clear impact of over proliferation. On this basis, proposed advertisement 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 has the potential to result in significant harm to the visual amenities of the area by reason of cumulative impact given the extant planning permission and advertisement consent for a double sided digital display unit on the same stretch of pavement in an area specifically designed to be open and clear, but which is already negatively affected by excessive street clutter. The proposal would fail to safeguard the significance of the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area, which partly results from its sense of space and openness, and would cause less than substantial harm to the setting of the Grade II listed former Wellington Hotel. The resultant less than substantial harm to the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area and the listed building is not justified, mitigated, or outweighed by public benefit in the context of the extant consent for a similar feature nearby. On this basis, proposed advertisement 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