

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
25/00875/FUL	Nick Brookman	22 nd May 2026

DETERMINATION DATE
29th May 2026 (Extension of time)

Address: Moto Birch Eastbound Services, M62 Between Junctions 18 & 19 Heywood

Proposal: Retention of electric vehicle charging hub consisting of 12no. EVC points and associated equipment (Retrospective).

PUBLICITY	Weekly list expired?	Y	Site Notice Expired?	Y
	Neighbour letters expired?	Y	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

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	Approve subject to conditions
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RG

DATE: 27 May 2026

SITE

This application relates to the Eastbound Moto Birch M62 services.

The site is located to the east of Junction 18 (M60) of the M62, two miles from the M60 Manchester Ring Road, and a similar distance beyond Junction 19 (A6046). The site is located to the North of the M62 on the Eastbound carriageway. Access to the site is off the dedicated slip road from the M62 Eastbound and is bordered to the South by the M62 and farmland beyond, to the West and South by Whittle Lane, and by farmland to the East.

The site is contained to a space to the west of the main service station building which was formally a piece of part existing hardstanding and partly a cluster of semi-mature trees located to the area between the car park and M62 motorway.

The application site and wider Eastbound service station site has recently been released from the Green Belt as outlined in the newly adopted sub-regional planning policy document, the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE).

PROPOSAL

This application seeks planning permission for the retention of an electric vehicle charging hub (EV Hub) and associated works. Development work on a new EV Hub at the site commenced in November 2023 in order to meet the Government strategy for charging at motorway service areas and avoid operational delays. As constructed, the EV Hub provides 12no. charging bays including 2no. oversized bays which cater for users needing additional space to manoeuvre around their vehicle. The associated equipment comprises 12no. T175/350 high power charging upstands along with power cabinets, a packaged substation and SCADA cabinet.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

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

Sub-Regional

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE)

Policy JP Allocation 1.1 Heywood / Pilsworth (Northern Gateway)

Policy JP-S1 Sustainable Development
Policy JP-G7 Trees and Woodland
Policy JP-G8 A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Policy JP-P1 Sustainable Places

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

P3	Improving design of new development
G6	Enhancing green infrastructure
G7	Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity
G9	Reducing the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability

T2 Improving accessibility
DM1 General Development requirements

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

24/00267/FUL - Retention of electric vehicle charging hub consisting of 12no. EVC points and associated equipment (Retrospective). – Refused 2nd January 2025.

20/00683/FUL - Installation of 16 no. electric vehicle charging parking spaces on perimeter of existing car parking area – Approved 25th August 2020.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways and Engineering

No objection.

United Utilities

No comments received.

GMEU (Ecology)

No objection subject to condition.

REPRESENTATIONS

A Site Notice was posted in the vicinity of the site on the 3rd March 2026 and no responses were received.

ANALYSIS

Principle of Development

The application site was formerly located within the Green Belt as designated under Policy G/D/2 of the Unitary Development Plan. However, following the adoption of PfE, several areas of Green Belt were removed across Greater Manchester.

In this instance, the application site now forms part of a much wider land allocation under PfE which is referred to as Policy JP Allocation 1.1 (Heywood / Pilsworth Northern Gateway).

Impact on PfE Policy JPA 1.1 (Heywood / Pilsworth Northern Gateway).

The application site sits on the southern edge of the PfE Policy JPA 1.1 Allocation.

The site allocation seeks to deliver a total of around 1,200,00 sqm of industrial and warehousing space as well as delivering around 1,000 additional homes along with a new primary school in the eastern part of the allocation to support the early delivery of the infrastructure and provide a buffer between existing housing and the new employment development.

Therefore, in principle, regard must be had as to whether the development subject to this application would have any prejudicial impact on the Northern Gateway allocation coming forward in the future.

The development in this instance is in retrospect and is sited well within the limits of the existing service station consisting of the existing buildings, signage, alternative EV charging facilities and existing hardstanding.

To that effect, Officers consider that given the exceptionally small nature of the application site and it being located within an existing service station, it is not considered by officers that if the development were approved, it would prejudice any significant development or infrastructure intended for the purpose of the allocation coming forward in the future.

Having considered the above and the placement of the development in the context of the existing forms of development at this location, it is considered that the development put forward is acceptable in principle and it therefore accords with the requirements of Policies DM1 of the adopted Core Strategy and the NPPF.

Ecology and Biodiversity Impacts

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 192b) 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 measurable net gain.

As of 2nd April 2024, BNG of 10% for minor planning applications is mandatory for development in England under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In this instance however, the application is exempt from statutory BNG given the nature of the application being retrospective and the aforementioned provisions of the Environment Act and Town and Country Planning Act do not apply here.

The development subject to this application required the removal of a large cluster of trees. Whilst not protected, the removal of these trees represented a loss of an existing biodiversity provision. The application is accompanied by a Covering Letter which sets out that:

“A review of opportunities on site has been undertaken and it has been confirmed that due to site constraints (land not within the applicant’s control and land not available from the Landlord for BNG due to future development plans). it is not possible to provide BNG onsite. Therefore, it is proposed that BNG is provided offsite. A reservation letter confirming the offsite units and an updated BNG metric has been provided in support of this planning application. A planning condition is requested to secure the off-site BNG requirements. The provision of off-site units is considered to meet the requirements set out within the legislation”.

This application is in a unique position where it is not subject to statutory BNG provisions, but the applicant is prepared to purchase offsite units to compensate for the loss of biodiversity. The application is supported by a reservation letter from Integrated Land Management Ltd demonstrating the applicants commitment to purchasing the required biodiversity units at a habitat bank at Bridge Farm. This habitat bank is located in East Suffolk Local Planning Authority and South Norfolk & High Suffolk Claylands National Character Area, since this is a distant National Character Area from the proposed development the 0.5x Spatial Risk Multiplier has been applied to the units reserved. This habitat bank has a signed Conservation Covenant in place and is registered on the Biodiversity Gain Site Register.

The applicant has since confirmed that a deposit has been paid for the provision of the off-site biodiversity units and a statement of account has been provided to evidence that.

GMEU were consulted on this application and they have commented that owing to the evidence provided and submitted with the application, they are confident that the information provided is genuine. If the application was subject to the statutory Biodiversity condition, then evidence of full proof of purchase would be required to discharge the condition. Given the exclusive circumstances of this retrospective application, the GMEU are satisfied to recommend that a standard condition be attached to this permission that requires the applicant to provide evidence of full purchase.

Accordingly, subject to condition, the scheme is considered to be acceptable in accordance with Core Strategy Policy G6 and G7, PfE Policy JP-G8 and the NPPF.

Impact on Visual Amenity, Character and Appearance

Policies DM1, P1, P2 and P3 of the Council’s adopted Core Strategy require development proposals to demonstrate high quality design. In addition, paragraphs 131 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) state that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places 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.

The overall design is acceptable in the context of the existing built environment and existing neighbouring land uses at this location which remains very much commercial in nature with the adjacent Tesla chargers and wider service station site. As such, it is considered that the proposals would accord with the requirements of Policies DM1 and

P3 of the adopted Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant policies in PfE.

Highways

Core Strategy Policy T2 seeks a satisfactory level of accessibility and parking, requiring that in all circumstances, the safety, accessibility and amenity of those who live in an area will have priority. The Council's Highways team were consulted on this application and they have no objection to the proposal.

The provision of a net addition to parking at this location is supported and no highway safety concerns are presented with the proposal sited within the area of the existing car park utilising existing access arrangements. Moreover, the proposal will increase the EV charging provision at this strategic location and is considered to be in accordance with Core Strategy Policy T2 and the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that permission is **Granted** subject to the conditions below:

1. This permission relates to the following plans and documents:
 - Location Plan Drawing No 7928_410
 - General Site Layout Drawing No ENV2268-100 Rev E
 - Site Plan as Proposed Drawing No 7928_412
 - Ductwork Drawing No ENV2268-101 Rev F
 - Linework Drawing No ENV2268-105 Rev E
 - Offsite BNG Reservation Letter – Issued by Integrated Land Management Ltd
 - Elevations Drawing No 7928_413
 - Setting Out Plan Drawing No ENV2268-103 Rev G
 - BNG Baseline Map Drawing No 001 Rev 1
 - BNG Post Intervention Map Drawing No 001 Rev 1
 - Covering Letter dated 21 August 2025
 - BNG Metric dated 17 April 2025
 - Terra HP high power charging product leaflet

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, the saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. Within 3 months of the date of this permission, evidence shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority that includes:
 - a) Confirmation of any registered offsite biodiversity gain allocated to the development and the biodiversity value of that gain in relation to the development;
 - b) Full evidence and proof of purchase for all biodiversity credits purchased for the development relating to the biodiversity value of that gain in relation to the development.

Reason: In the interests of enhancing biodiversity in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-G8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:

- a) A Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority,
- and;
- b) The planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan, if one is required in respect of this permission would be Rochdale Council.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain does not apply to retrospective planning applications.

Procedure Statement

The proposal complies with the development plan and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. It therefore comprises sustainable development and the Local Planning Authority worked proactively to issue the decision without delay.