

Officer Report

Case Reference: NOT/2026/0517
Location: WALLHEAD ROAD, NEWBOLD, ROCHDALE, OL16 5DB
Proposal: Prior notification for a proposed 20m high telecommunications pole, 6 no. antennas, 3 no. RRU's, 2 no 300 dishes, together with 1 no. GPS module and equipment housing
Recommendation: Not Required
Officer: Rosalind Gralton

SITE

The site located on a small area of grass within Blueberry Business Park and opposite Kingsway Retail Park. The site is also beside a KFC carpark and can be accessed off Wallhead Road.

The wider site consists of warehouse and a variety of shops and restaurants such as McDonalds, Sports Direct and B&M. There is also a large carpark associated with the retail park.

The site is within the Defined Urban Area and a Primary Employment Zone.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks prior approval for the installation of a new 20m lattice mast, hosting 6no. antennas, with 3no. and all other associated ancillary apparatus and permitted development thereto. This application follows the recently approved application of 25/00876/TELE, which was located on a small area of grass.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (As Amended).

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Places for Everyone

JP-S1 Sustainable Development

JP-P1 Sustainable Places

JP-C2 Digital Connectivity

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

SO3 Improving design, image and quality of place

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

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

The listed reference is relating to the same site, approximately 10m north of the proposed site of this application:

25/00876/TELE - The installation of a new 20m monopole, hosting 6no. antennas, with 3no. and all other associated ancillary apparatus and permitted development thereto. - Approve subject to conditions

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Env Health - Noise/Odours

No comments received to date

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was publicised by way of a site notice was displayed in the vicinity. No comments have been received.

ANALYSIS

Part 16, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) states that development consisting of the installation, alteration or replacement of electronic communications apparatus (other than on a building) is not permitted by Class A(a) if –

(a) in the case of the installation of electronic communications apparatus (other than a mast), the apparatus, excluding any antenna, would exceed a height of 15 metres above ground level;

(b) in the case of the alteration or replacement of electronic communications apparatus (other than a mast) that is already installed, the apparatus, excluding any antenna, would when altered or replaced exceed the height of the existing apparatus or a height of 15 metres above ground level, whichever is the greater;

(c) in the case of the installation of a mast, the mast, excluding any antenna, would exceed a height of—

(i) 30 metres above ground level on unprotected land; or

(ii) 25 metres above ground level on article 2(3) land or land which is on a highway; or

(d) in the case of the alteration or replacement of a mast, the height of the mast, excluding any antenna, would when altered or replaced exceed the greater of the height of the existing mast or a height of—

(i) 30 metres above ground level on unprotected land; or

(ii) 25 metres above ground level on article 2(3) land or land which is on a highway; or

(e) in the case of the alteration or replacement of a mast—

(i) the mast is on any land which is, or is within, a site of special scientific interest; and

(ii) the mast would, when altered or replaced, exceed the original width of the mast by more than one third.

The erection of a lattice mast up to 20m in height within the field to support electronic communications transmission apparatus with associated street cabinet would be development permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A.

The application is therefore for a determination whether the prior approval of the Council will be required as to the siting and appearance of the installation, as required under paragraph A.3 of the Order.

Siting and appearance

Paragraph 119 of the NPPF requires installations to be kept to a minimum and encourages the reuse of existing electronic communications infrastructure such as existing masts, buildings and other structures. Where new sites are required such as for new 5G networks, equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.

There is no requirement to have regard to the development plan as there would be for any development requiring planning permission. Nevertheless, Policies P1, P2,

P3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy are material considerations as they relate to issues of siting, appearance and heritage. In addition, Policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of the recently adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE) are relevant given their aspirations to achieve high quality places and to conserve, sustain and enhance heritage assets and their settings. PfE Policy JP-C2 emphasises the ambition for Greater Manchester to become a digitally connected city region, however, does explicitly set out that this should not come at the expense of townscape quality. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is also a material consideration, and this includes a section on supporting high quality communications. Paragraph 139 of the Framework is explicit in that development which is not well-designed should be refused.

The application is within Blueberry Business Park, within this is KFC and associated carpark, the proposed site is on a small area of grass beside this carpark. The site is also opposite Kingsway Retail Park, this is made up of large retail stores, large carpark, and restaurants. Within the vicinity there is limited vegetation. There are no residential dwellings within the vicinity of the site. The site is approximately 10m south of the previously approved application. This amended location, while this slightly differs, is still well within the context of the business park and retail park, and as the proposal is identical, it is not considered there to be any key difference in the impact on siting or appearance.

The proposed development will be 20m in height, this is considered a substantial structure, and it will be taller than the existing street furniture and immediate buildings. The existing trees are approx. 6m in height and the street lighting is approx. 8m in height. The buildings are almost industrial in nature with signage on the front of shops and restaurants, this will make up part of the backdrop for the proposed development. The lattice mast is slim and has a simple design, there is no bulky headframe. It is noted there are some trees that will mitigate the harm of the proposed development to a point at ground level. The upper part of the frame will be visible and seen against the backdrop of the sky. The proposal remains very similar to the recently approved application, and there are no concerns in regard to the appearance being altered.

The proposed development will be seen from long range views in both directions when travelling along Rochdale Bypass, it will also be prominent when entering both the business park and retail park via Wallhead Road. Again, the development will be mostly seen in the context of the surrounding retail uses. The proposed development will not appear alien within the context of the street or have an overbearing impact on pedestrians as it is not on the footpath. On balance the proposed development is not considered to have a negative impact on the surrounding amenity of the area

The site of the proposed lattice mast and associated equipment is an appropriate location that has limited the impact on the character and visual amenity of the area. On balance, due to the immediate surroundings being of a retail nature and there being no residential dwellings within the immediate vicinity it is considered that the proposal would not be overly prominent and would have a limited impact on the character and visual amenity of the surrounding area.

In light of the above, it is considered that the siting and design of the proposals is acceptable and compliant with the requirements of the NPPF.

Highways

Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states 'Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.'

The Highways department was not consulted on this application in error. However, given the application is very similar to the previous application, these comments are carried over. No objections were raised to this and the slight difference in siting will not have a negative effect on the highway.

It is considered, by reason of siting the proposal is compliant with policies T2 and DM1 of the Rochdale Core Strategy as well as the National Planning Policy Framework.

RECOMMENDATION

PRIOR APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED

Recommendation: Not Required

- 1 For the avoidance of doubt, this decision relates to the following plans:
 - Site Location Maps 100
 - Proposed Site Plan 201 B
 - Proposed Site Elevation 301 B