

Officer Report

Case Reference: PL/2026/0622
Location: Pavement opposite, 329 Manchester New Road, Rochdale, M24 1JR
Proposal: Internally illuminated double-sided paper advertisement
Recommendation: Approve with Conditions
Officer: Luke Rigby

SITE

The application site consists of a small stretch of the public highway opposite No. 329 Manchester New Road in Middleton. The application site specifically relates to a bus shelter. Manchester New Road is a busy public highway which runs from Middleton Town Centre before terminating at Rochdale Road.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks advertisement consent for the addition of 1No. internally illuminated, double-sided paper advertisement unit to a bus shelter. The unit would measure some 1.895m in height and 1.065m in width, with a depth of 0.255m and a height from the ground of 0.4m. Internal illuminance would be 600 cd/sqm.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None relevant.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Sub-Regional Guidance

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE)

JP-P1

Sustainable Places

Local Guidance

Saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2006:

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS) 2016:

P3 Improving Design of New Development

DM1 General Development Requirements

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement, no publicity was issued for this application.

SUMMARY OF THIRD-PARTY REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways Department

No objection

ASSESSMENT

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, the distinctiveness of its town centres, housing areas and countryside and the qualities of its landscape

The application proposes the installation of an internally illuminated advertisement within the display panel of an existing bus shelter. Advertisements of this nature are a common feature of bus shelters and are frequently found within the street scene, particularly along well-connected routes such as Manchester New Road. The proposed advertisement would be contained within the purpose-built advertisement panel and would not result in any physical alteration to the bus shelter itself which would appear otherwise incongruous or out of character.

Having regard to the character of the surrounding area, it is considered that the advertisement would appear as a typical and expected element of street furniture. By virtue of its siting within an existing bus shelter advertisement display, the proposal would integrate satisfactorily with the surrounding street scene and would not appear visually intrusive, incongruous or out of keeping with the character of the area.

Whilst the advertisement would be internally illuminated, the scale, form and method of display are typical of those commonly expected within the public street scene. As such, it is not considered that the proposal would give rise to any unacceptable harm to visual amenity, either individually or cumulatively with other signage in the vicinity. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policies P2 and P3 of the Core Strategy and the guidance contained within Paragraph 141 of the NPPF.

The Highways Department were consulted on the proposal and raises no objection. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the safe operation of the highway network by reason of illuminance or obstruction.

It is therefore considered that the application does not materially conflict with the requirements of the adopted Places for Everyone policy JP-P1, adopted Rochdale Core Strategy policies P1, P2, P3, T2 and DM1, and the National Planning Policy Framework

PROCEDURAL STATEMENT

Article 35 Declaration

Officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the planning application. No significant problems have arisen during the consideration of this application, and the application has been determined in a timely manner, in accordance with the policies with the Development Plan.

Human Rights and Public Sector Equality Duty

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report. In particular, Article 6 (1), of the European Convention on Human Rights in relation civil rights and a fair hearing; Article 8 of the ECHR in relation to the right to respect for private and family life and Article 1 Protocol 1 of the ECHR in relation to the protection of property have all been taken into account.

In addition, the Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination in respect of certain protected characteristics namely: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, or beliefs and sex and sexual orientation. It places the Local Planning Authority under a legal duty to have due regard to the advancement of equality in the exercise of its powers including planning powers. Officers have taken this into account in the assessment of the application. In particular due regard has been afforded to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Officers are satisfied that the application material and Officers' assessment has taken into account these issues.

The application has been considered in accordance with the Rochdale Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy – Embracing All Voices (2024-2026), which seeks to promote a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion that benefit the community as a whole.

Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

Condition(s) (6)

- 1 No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.
- 2 No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to –
 - endanger persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);
 - obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway sign or aid to navigation by water or air; or
 - hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.
- 3 Any advertisement displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site.
- 4 Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a condition that does not endanger the public.
- 5 Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the site shall be left in a condition that does not endanger the public or impair visual amenity.

- 6 The approval is for a period not exceeding five years from the date of this consent.

Approval Reason(s) (1)

- 1 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.

Informatives (1)

- 1 For the avoidance of doubt, this decision relates to the following plans:
- Bus Shelter Specification (JCDecaux)
 - Site Plan and Images Combined Plans