

Officer Report

Case Reference: PL/2026/0624
Location: UNIT 2 TO 3, MAGNUM CENTRE, FISHWICK STREET,
ROCHDALE, OL16 5NP
Proposal: Installation of 4 no. external air source heat pump units
Recommendation: Approve with Conditions
Officer: Majid Mir

SITE

The application relates to the units 2 and 3 of Magnum Centre. Units 2 and 3 of Magnum Centre is presently occupied by Screwfix and is used as a retail unit. The site is accessed via Bilberry Street off Fishwick Street. The site consists of 11 units located in two buildings. A building to the west has three units (units 9 to 11) with the remaining eight units (units 1 to 8) located in the larger building to the east. The larger building has a car park to the front and to the rear.

To the east, the Magnum Centre shares a part of its boundary with the side of no. 76-78 Milnrow Road which consists of units including a tyre shop, paint and body work shop, car wash and garage. The Magnum Centre also shares a side boundary with the residential properties of no. 7 Aisha Close, no. 9 Moss Terrace and no. 139 Bilberry Street.

To the west of the Magnum Centre is Fishwick Street. On the other side of Fishwick Street and to the south of the Magnum Centre are units within Scotts Industrial Park.

To the north is the busy Milnrow Road. To the north of Milnrow Road is a train line and further north is Chichester Business Park.

Magnum Centre, Scotts Industrial Park and Chichester Business Park are all located within Mixed Employment Zones as identified under policy EC/3 of the UDP. Magnum Centre along with Scotts Industrial Park and Chichester Business Park are also located within the Defined Urban Area as identified under policy G/D/1 of the UDP.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks to install 4 Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) on the front elevation of the unit 2 and 3 of Magnum Centre. The units will be sited 2.5m and 3.5m above ground floor level.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE)

JP-P1 Sustainable Places

JP-J1 Supporting Long-Term Economic Growth

JP-S1 Sustainable Development

JP-S2 Carbon and Energy

JP-S3 Heat and Energy Networks

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS)

SD1 Delivering sustainable development

DM1 General Development Requirements

SO1 Delivering a more prosperous economy

E2 Increasing jobs and prosperity

SO3 Improving design, image and quality of place

P3 Improving design of new development

SO4 Promoting a greener environment

G1 Tackling and adapting to climate change

G3 Renewable and low carbon energy developments

G9 Reducing the impact of pollution

SO5 Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport

T2 Improving Accessibility

Appendix 5 Schedule of Parking Standards

Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Supplementary Planning Guidance note 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (June 2016).

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

06/D47348 - Erection Of Eleven Units (B2/B8 Use) With Trade Counter. Decision: Approve with conditions.

97/D34394 - Erection Of 2.0M High Boundary Fencing. Decision: Approve with conditions.

82/D13803 - Change Of Use Of Premises From Sheet Metal Manufacturing To Retail Sales. Decision: Refuse.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Environmental Health (Noise and Odour)

No objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of notification were sent to neighbouring properties, and a site notice was placed in the vicinity of the site. No representations were received.

ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development/Energy and Climate Change

The application site is located on land that is designated within the defined urban area as identified under policy G/D/1 of the UDP. This is a general policy which seeks to ensure that new development is concentrated within the urban area in order to support urban regeneration and protect the countryside. The application property is also located within a Mixed Employment Zone.

The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, by managing the use and development of land in the long-term public interest. To achieve sustainable development, the planning system has three overarching objectives; economic, social and environmental. The environmental objective is particularly relevant to this proposal stating that planning system needs ‘to support efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy; and to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, and minimising waste and pollution.’

Chapter 5 of the NPPF states that the objective of the policies within the chapter ‘is to support the transition to net zero by 2050 and to shape places in ways which are more resilient to the effects of climate change. It does this by setting out policies to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the full range of current and potential impacts of climate change, by minimising vulnerability and improving resilience.’

Policy CC2 of the NPPF states that ‘substantial weight should be given to the benefits of improving the energy efficiency of existing buildings and/or drawing energy from district heat networks, renewable and low carbon sources’.

Policy W3 of the NPPF also states that when considering proposals for renewable and low-carbon energy development, substantial weight should be given to the benefits for improving energy security, supporting economic development,

the transition to a net zero future, and contribution that small-scale and community-led renewable and low carbon energy projects can make to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, along with their associated economic and social benefits.

With regard to local policies, policy G1 (tackling and adapting to climate change) addresses climate change to ensure growth does not increase CO2 emissions by ‘encouraging and promoting renewable energy developments, including standalone and community developments, than do not, by virtue of their scale, siting, construction or operation, cause harm to the local area, it’s character and environmental assets and adjoining uses, which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated’.

PfE policy formally sets out Greater Manchester’s ambitious target to be carbon neutral by 2038. The PfE in policy JP-S2 states that retrofitting of existing buildings with measures to improve energy efficiency and generate renewable and low carbon energy, heating and cooling will be supported. Additionally, a positive approach will be taken to renewable and low carbon energy schemes, particularly schemes that are led by, or meet the needs of local communities.

The air source heat pumps would support the reduction in the use of carbon energy sources within the commercial unit. Additionally, the installation of the air source heat pumps will help support the business with energy costs. As such it is considered the proposal is acceptable in principle and accords with the relevant policies within the Core Strategy, PfE and NPPF.

Design and Visual Amenity

Policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy require development proposals to be of high quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area and to enhance the borough’s identity and sense of place, by respecting context where it is positive and having regard to the scale, density, massing, height, layout, landscape, materials and access of surrounding buildings and areas in general.

The proposed ASHPs would be sited on the external facing elevation of the application property. The application property and the neighbouring adjoining properties within the Magnum Centre are commercial buildings. The buildings are clearly visually commercial buildings. The ASHPs would be sited on the front elevation approximately 2.5m and 3.5m off the ground. To the front of the application property is a large shared car park. The ASHPs would not be visible from the public highway. Nevertheless, when viewed, the ASHPs would be viewed within the context of the commercial units.

Considering the use of the buildings and the designation of the land within which the Magnum Centre is located, the proposed ASHPs would not be unduly impact on the character of the area and would not appear as incongruous additions.

The design of the proposal is therefore acceptable and accords with policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the SPD and the NPPF.

Neighbour Amenity

Policy G9 of the Core Strategy establishes that development should not have impacts that lead to an unacceptable increase in air, water, noise, light or other pollution. Policy DM1 also requires development proposals to mitigate against any impact due to noise, air, dust, light and odour pollution and requires that applications do not have an adverse impact on health.

The proposed ASHPs would be sited on the front elevation of a commercial building. The building is located within a business centre and neighbours an industrial park and another business centre. There is also a railway line within close vicinity of the site. The nearest residential properties are located to the east and to the rear of the application property. No. 7 Aisha Close is sited approximately 54m from the site of the proposed ASHPs.

The application four ASHPs; two Daikin RZASG71M2V1B and two Daikin RZA250D ASHPs. The supporting reports confirm that the ASHPs would have maximum sound power level of 76dBA and 65dBA.

The Environmental Health department raised no objection to the proposal. Furthermore, it is noted that the intervening application building and boundary treatment lies between the proposed ASHPs and the nearest residential receptors, and thereby providing additional acoustic screening. Additionally, it is noted that the application site is located within a business centre, neighbours an industrial park and another business centre, rail line and the busy Oldham Road. The noise from these would mix in with the noise from the ASHPs and therefore would not be notable from some neighbouring residential receptors.

The proposal is therefore considered the proposal is unlikely to result in unacceptable noise disturbance to nearby occupiers of residential properties. As such, it is considered that the proposal accords with policies DM1 and G9 of the Core Strategy, the PfE and the NPPF.

Other Material Considerations

Noting that the proposal is for ASHPs hung on the front elevation of a commercial unit located in a business centre within a mixed employment zone, and there is a car park to the front and rear the application property, no constraints have been identified in regard to highways, drainage or land contamination. In regard to Biodiversity Net Gain, the application meets the 'de minimis' exemption criteria.

Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

Condition(s) (2)

- 1 The development must be begun not later than three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason. Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents hereby approved:

- Existing ground floor plan. Drawing number: 11531-103-01

- Existing external elevations. Drawing number: 11531-103-02
- Proposed ground floor plan. Drawing number: 11531-103-03
- Proposed external elevations. Drawing number: 11531-103-04
- Block plan. Drawing number: 11531-103-05
- Location plan. Drawing number: 11531-103-06
- Existing block plan. Drawing number: 11531-103-07

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, the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Approval Reason(s) (1)

- 3 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.