

Rochdale Council

Planning Application PL/2026/0699

Description Demolition of the existing petrol filling station forecourt, canopy, kiosk and retail building and redevelopment of the site to provide a replacement petrol filling station comprising a sales building with convenience store, ancillary food-to-go counter, office, customer WC and ATM, fuel pump islands and canopy, 3 EV charging stations (serving 6 charging bays), parking and servicing areas to serve the petrol filling station and existing coffee shop, landscaping, engineering works and re-routing of the existing pedestrian link

Site Address SUDDEN SERVICE STATION, MANCHESTER ROAD, ROCHDALE, OL11 3PT

Thank you for consulting the Ecology Unit on the above planning application.

Impact on trees and woodland

I would advise that the application is refused because of unacceptable losses to trees and woodland, contrary to Policies NE/8 and NE/9 of the Local Plan and Policy N2 of the NPPF. The proposals will result in the loss of 0.2ha of established broadleaved woodland, including more than 50 individual trees and tree groups. Many of these trees are either mature or semi-mature and are of at least moderate quality. The woodland is in a highly prominent location adjacent to one of the main access routes to the town centre and is a highly visible landscape feature. The woodland also screens housing on Long Hill and Rufford Avenue from very busy road traffic. There is limited space within the proposed development layout to allow for new tree planting, and therefore any new planting on-site will not adequately compensate for the tree losses. I am not aware that the applicant has offered any off-site tree planting.

Impact on biodiversity

The woodland losses will result in a significant local loss in biodiversity, contrary to statute which requires development to achieve at least a 10% net gain in biodiversity.

If the Council is minded to refuse the development consideration should be given to applying a TPO to this area of woodland to prevent any unauthorised felling.

If the Council is minded for overriding reasons to approve the development I would advise –

- That a suitable contribution is sought for compensatory off-site tree planting.
- That to protect retained trees and woodland the Tree Protection Plan provided is required to be implemented in full by Condition.
- That the statutory Biodiversity Gain Condition is applied to any permission which may be granted to the application, to require the pre-commencement submission of a Biodiversity Gain Plan. The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include full details of where and how the required biodiversity gains will be achieved.
- No tree removals should take place during the optimum time of year for bird nesting (March to August inclusive). All nesting birds their eggs and young are legally protected under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Yours

Derek Richardson

Derek Richardson

Principal Ecologist

Planning and Transportation

Strategic Growth

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