MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no.	135483/AOH/2022
Date registered valid:	15 November 2022
Proposal:	Installation of 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of associated street hub unit.
Address:	Pavement In Front Of 1 Victoria Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 6RA
Ward(s):	Higher Blackley Ward
Applicant:	Mr James Browne BT Telecommunications Plc Pp 8.05, Faraday Building, 1 Knightrider Street, London, EC4V 5BT
Agent (if any):	Mr Josh Lee Solutions30 Regus - 82 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WQ
Case officer:	Steven McCoombe Tel: 0161 234 4607 Email: steven.mccoombe@manchester.gov.uk
Recommendation:	Approve
Date of recommendation:	10 January 2023

Application details

Type of application: Advertisement Hoardings Consent

Development type: Advertisements

Date of site visit: 29 November 2022

Standard consultations: Printed: 6 December 2022 Expired: 27 December 2022

Neighbour notifications: Printed: 23 November 2022 Expired: 14 December 2022

Site notice: Posted: 29 November 2022 Expired: 20 December 2022

Press advert: Published: 29 November 2022 Expired: 23 November 2022

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building/area

Listed building: Not applicable

Conservation area: Not applicable

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

The application relates to a portion of pavement located outside No.1 Victoria Avenue on the adjoining corner with Rochdale Road in the Higher Blackley ward of Manchester. Located outside the 'A Pedra De Siao' Pentecostal church, the site sits adjacent to a busy crossroads on the opposing corner to the Avenue Library and Learning Centre.

Description of development

The applicant is seeking advertisement consent for the display of 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens in association with a new BT street hub (application ref: 135482/FO/2022).

BT street hubs are free-standing structures featuring a fully accessible tablet interface and digital HD display screens on two sides. Overall, the dimensions of a BT street hub are: 2.98m in height, 1.236m in width (with a reduced, tapered base of 1.201m) and 0.35m in depth. The screens are to display commercial, community and council-based content at 10-second intervals with illuminance levels of 2500cd/m2. Displays are set to automatically dim at night to 600cd/m2, following daylight hours. Each unit will also feature a video camera above each screen as well as one built into the tablet.

Each BT Street hub aims to offer:

- Opportunities for advertisements
- Ultrafast public and encrypted Wi-Fi
- Access to public services
- Free phone calls
- Multiple accessibility options

- Secure power-only USB ports for rapid device charging
- Free phone calls
- Direct 999 call button
- Useful real-time information (including community and emergency awareness messaging)
- Environmental sensors to measure air quality, noise, traffic etc.
- Maps and wayfinding

The applicant's supporting information indicates that all street hubs are powered by 100% renewable carbon-free energy and are inspected weekly, cleaned bi-weekly and monitored 24/7. Their LED-backlit LCD screens consume approximately 60% less power than Cold Cathode Fluorescent Tubes whilst their screen filters reflect light and reduce the need for high power, noisy cooling systems. Through utilising industrial-grade components, the street hubs are able to operate at high temperatures, thus reducing the need for cooling. The supporting information states that noise emanating from the hubs should not exceed: 41dB at a distance of 3m during the day, 35dB at a distance of 3m during the night and operational volume should not exceed 60dB at a distance of 1m.

Associated Applications

135482/FO/2022 - Installation of 1no. new BT Street Hub, incorporating 75" LCD advert screens plus the removal of associated BT kiosk(s)

Consultations & Notification Responses

Local residents, as per appendix 1 – no comments or objections received.

Environmental health made comments and recommended a number of conditions in relation to controlling the light, noise, and maintenance of the units.

Highways made the following comments:

- "The proposed equipment would be located directly adjacent to the pedestrian crossing, which is a key desire line for pedestrians, and therefore would limit the capacity of the footway for those wishing to cross."
- "It is not acceptable to reduce footway widths and increase street clutter when as a City we are promoting Active Travel via walking and cycling."

It should be noted that the agent and applicant were notified of these comments and amended the application as a result, with revised drawings being submitted. These amendments included the re-positioning of the proposed unit so that it was located a greater distance away from the edge of the public highway (approximately 3.282m instead of 2.6m). Prior to these amendments, the application would not have been supported, however the re-positioning of the unit has enabled the application to now be considered acceptable.

Policies

The following policies are considered relevant in the consideration of this application.

Unitary Development Plan (UDP) – The UDP has been superseded by the Core Strategy Development Plan, but certain policies are still considered of relevance:

- Policy DC15 – Advertisements, hoardings, and posters

The Manchester Core Strategy – Development Plan Document 2012-2027 ("the Core Strategy") was adopted by the City Council on the 11th of July 2012:

- Policy DM1 – Development Management
- Policy SP1 – Spatial Principles

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021)

- Chapter 7 – Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres
- Chapter 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

For reasons to be outlined below, it is considered that the proposal accords with the principles of these policy documents.

Issues

Principle – The principle of installing a BT street hub so as to provide opportunities for advertising as well as a range of services to the public (including free Wi-Fi, free phone calls, secure USB-port charging, useful real-time information, maps and wayfinding) is acceptable, however consideration must be given to the proposal's impact upon existing levels of visual amenity, public safety and its accessibility.

Visual Amenity – The street hub would be located away from residential property, situated adjacent to the crossroads of Victoria Avenue and Rochdale Road, on the pavement outside No.1 Victoria Avenue. The unit will be made of galvanised mild steel, with a powder coated external grade aluminium exterior. Displays will be made of tempered and toughed laminated glass. There will also be RF transparent compartments. The dimensions of the unit will be 2.98m in height, 1.236m in width and 0.35m in depth, whilst the dimensions of the advertisement/advertisement screens will be 1.67m in height, 0.95m in width and 0.35m in depth. The maximum height of any individual letters and symbols will be 0.12m (120cm) with various colours of text and images against a black background. The advertisement will be internally illuminated, with static illuminance levels of 2500cd/m².

Considering the characteristics of the advert, the proposal is not considered to harm the visual or aural amenity of the area as it is relatively standard in design and scale and is in an acceptable position in regard to its distance and relationship with Victoria Avenue and Rochdale Road. The proposed advert is therefore considered to be well-designed and will have minimal detrimental impact upon the street scene and visual amenity.

Public Safety – The agent has confirmed that the internally illuminated advert will have an illuminance level of 2500cd/m², dimming to 600cd/m² between dusk and dawn, and LED-backlit LCD screens with reduced glare. These specifications accord with the guidelines set out by the Institute of Lighting Professionals in the 'Professional Lighting Guide 05: The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements' and is thus considered acceptable as the units should not cause an unreasonable amount of light pollution during hours of darkness and should also not pose a significant threat or distraction to road users.

Conclusion – Given the above issues, it is considered that the advert is acceptable in terms of both visual amenity and public safety in accordance with policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy, saved policy DC15 of the UDP and chapters 7 and 12 of the NPPF.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations

This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved polices of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the recommendation given is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation: Approve

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

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.

No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to:
(a) endanger persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);
(b) obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air; or
(c) hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.

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.

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.

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.

2) The maximum luminance level of the advertisements hereby approved shall not exceed 2500cd/m2.

Reason - In the interests of pedestrian/highway safety and residential amenity enjoyed within the vicinity of the site, pursuant to policy DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

3) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the drawings labelled 'Generic Drawing Elevations, 'Existing and Proposed Elevations', 'Site Location Maps', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 15th November,

and the revised drawing labelled 'Proposed Site Plan', stamped as received on the 10th January 2023.

Reason - To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, pursuant to Policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

4) (a) No individual advertisements shall be displayed for duration of less than 10 seconds.

(b) Controls shall be in place to ensure smooth uninterrupted transition of images displayed on the panel.

(c) The display panel shall be fitted with a light sensor, designed to adjust the brightness to changes in ambient light levels.

(d) A mechanism shall be in place so that if the installation breaks down, it defaults to a black screen to avoid any flashing error messages or pixilation.

(e) The maximum luminance level of the advertisements displayed on the panel shall not exceed 600 cd/m2 during non-daylight hours / inclement weather.

Reason - In the interests of public and highways safety, pursuant to Policies DM1 and SP1 of the Core Strategy.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services
Environmental Health
Environmental Health

1184 Rochdale Road, Manchester, M9 6ER
1182 Rochdale Road, Manchester, M9 6ER
8A Victoria Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 6QL
1178 Rochdale Road, Manchester, M9 6ER
First And Second Floor Flats, Victoria Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 6QL
4A Victoria Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 6QL
4 Victoria Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 6QL
6 Victoria Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 6QL
7 Victoria Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 6RA
8 Victoria Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 6QL
9 Victoria Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 6RA
7A Victoria Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 6RA
11 Victoria Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 6RA
10 Victoria Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 6QL
9A Victoria Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 6RA
1180 Rochdale Road, Manchester, M9 6ER

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - Aircraft Safeguarding - Not Affected
Coal Authority - Development Low Risk - Name: DEVELOPMENT_LOW_RISK_AREA
Historic Landfill Site 250m Buffer -
Area Team Boundary - Name: NORTH AREA