

19/00089/FUL

STREET RECORD - HIGH STREET RAYLEIGH

**INSTALLATION OF A RAPID ELECTRIC VEHICLE
CHARGING POINT**

APPLICANT: **ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL**
ZONING: **TOWN CENTRE & CONSERVATION AREA**
PARISH: **RAYLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL**
WARD: **WHEATLEY**

1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That planning permission be approved subject to the following conditions: -

- (1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of two years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with Section 91(1) of The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- (2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents: date stamped 14 February 2019

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the details as approved.

- (3) The external surfaces of the development hereby approved shall be constructed of materials and finish as detailed in the Supporting Document scanned on 1 February 2019, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

REASON: In the interest of the character and appearance of the area in accordance with policy DM1 and DM3 of the Development Management Plan, policy CP2 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.

2 PLANNING APPLICATION DETAILS

- 2.1 This application is to be considered by the Development Committee as the applicant is Rochford District Council.
- 2.2 Rochford District Council (RDC) has been granted funding to install electric vehicle (EV) charging points across the district. A number will be installed as 'permitted development', not requiring planning permission. However, some of the chargers do require planning permission; the current proposal represents one of those chargers requiring permission.
- 2.3 In conjunction with RDC and Essex County Council colleagues and a third party supplier, a mix of 'fast' and 'rapid' chargers are proposed to be installed in Council car parks. One rapid charger is proposed to be installed in High Street, Rayleigh.
- 2.4 This application relates to one rapid charger to be located within the footway to the southern side of Rayleigh High Street. It would measure 1.8m by 0.94m by 0.41m.
- 2.5 Associated electricity feeder pillars, signage and line markings will also be put in place as appropriate. Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) will also be introduced where required.

3 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Site and Context

- 3.1 The site is in High Street Rayleigh within the Conservation Area and Rayleigh Town Centre. The proposed charging point would be located within the highway to the southern side of the High Street outside units 43, 45 and 47, close to the road and near to an existing bench and bin.

3.2 Site Planning History

- 3.3 13/00077/FUL - Land Fronting 61 To 85 High Street Rayleigh - Change of Use to Open Air Market to Operate on Wednesdays (Retrospective) Weekends, Bank Holidays and at the Christmas Lights Event – Approved.
- 3.4 17/01146/FUL - Street Record High Street Rayleigh - Change of Use to Open Air Market to Operate on Wednesdays, Weekends and Bank Holidays (Land fronting 39-59 and 81-91 High Street) - Approved.

4 CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 **Rayleigh Town Council** – The Rayleigh Town Council has planning permission to use the pavement at the application site to be used as weekly high street market and events. The Council objects on grounds of loss of public car parking in the High Street detrimental to the local economy,

businesses and market traders and on the grounds of highway safety, traffic generation and impact on the Conservation Area.

4.2 **ECC Highways** – No objections.

4.3 **ECC Historic Buildings and Conservation Advice** - There is no objection to the principle of installing this feature in a Conservation Area. However, the siting proposed is a prominent position in the centre of the Conservation Area.

Considering the location and size of the feature I consider this proposal will cause harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This harm is considered to be 'less than substantial' to a designated heritage asset and therefore paragraph 196 of the NPPF is relevant.

I recommend other, more sympathetic, locations are explored.

4.4 **Cadent Gas Ltd.** - Cadent have identified operational gas apparatus within the application site boundary. This may include a legal interest (easements or wayleaves) in the land which restricts activity in proximity to Cadent assets in private land. The applicant must ensure that proposed works do not infringe on Cadent's legal rights and any details of such restrictions should be obtained from the landowner in the first instance. If buildings or structures are proposed directly above the gas apparatus then development should only take place following a diversion of this apparatus. The applicant should contact Cadent's Plant Protection Team at the earliest opportunity to discuss proposed diversions of apparatus to avoid any unnecessary delays. If any construction traffic is likely to cross a Cadent pipeline then the applicant must contact Cadent's Plant Protection Team to see if any protection measures are required. All developers are required to contact Cadent's Plant Protection Team for approval before carrying out any works on site and ensuring requirements are adhered to.

4.5 **Neighbour Representations** - One objection has been received on grounds that the proposal would occupy the space which is used for pitches on Wednesday's High Street Market. This space is a prime location for market pitches. The proposal could be abused as a free parking space under the pretence of charging a vehicle. There could be other potential locations in the near surrounding area where this could be located.

5 **CONSIDERATIONS**

Principle of Development

5.1 Rayleigh is one of the largest towns in the district. The Retail and Leisure Study for Rochford District produced in August 2008 identified Rayleigh as the District's strongest town centre and demonstrated a significant future requirement for additional comparison floor space. It is recommended that development should be intensified in this town centre.

At the same time air quality tests showed exceeding limits of particulate matter in the district. The Core Strategy states the Council's aspiration to increase air quality and decrease the impact of air pollution on the residents of the district. Electric vehicles are considered as a tool to reduce air pollution. The proposal would assist in achieving this goal and would accord with Policy ENV5 and RTC1 of the Rochford District Council Core Strategy (2011).

Impact on Character of the Area

- 5.2 The charging equipment would be of a modest size suitable as street furniture. It would be mostly wrapped in holsters that would be black in colour. The ECC Historic Buildings Advisor raises concern with regard to the proposal, considering that it would cause harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 5.3 However, the proposal is relatively modest in size and would be located amongst other street furniture such as a bench and bin. The site has been specifically identified as being the best location for a rapid charger, being adjacent to short stay bays within the High Street. On balance it is not considered that the Council would be justified in refusing the application.

Impact on Neighbours and Users of the High Street

- 5.4 The proposed Rapid Charging Equipment would require 30 minutes to charge a vehicle for up to 80% of its charging capacity. The proposed unit would serve two cars consecutively. The proposal would be beneficial to the users of the High Street and advantageous to the community as a whole.
- 5.5 Rayleigh has permission for a market to operate on Wednesdays, weekends and Bank Holidays. The proposal may interfere with market stall locations on the day the market operates. The market planning application did not approve set locations for the specific stalls. The charging point would be located close to the parking spaces and an existing bench and bin. The siting of the charging point is not considered to interfere with market stall locations to a degree that would justify refusal of this application.
- 5.6 The site of the equipment would be surrounded by commercial premises within a High Street environment. The charging units would not generate any unacceptable levels of noise whilst in use.

Parking

- 5.7 The proposal would involve usage of 2 existing parking spaces. However, this is considered a modest amount within an existing High Street environment where public parking exists within Council car parks for use by all vehicles, along with sustainable travel options.

6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and found there to be no impacts (either positive or negative) on protected groups as defined under the Equality Act 2010.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposal would not result in an adverse impact on the character of the area sufficient to justify refusal of the application or be detrimental to the amenities of the car park users. It would contribute positively towards the aim of cleaner air for the residents of the district.



Marcus Hotten

Assistant Director, Place & Environment

Relevant Development Plan Policies and Proposals

National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) - Ensuring the vitality of town centres; Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Rochford District Council Core Strategy (2011) – CP1, CP2, ENV5, RTC1

Rochford District Council Development Management Plan (2014) – Policy DM1, DM29, DM31

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Allocations Plan (February 2014)

Parking Standards Design and Good Practice (2010)

Rayleigh Town Centre Area Action Plan (2015)

Background Papers

None.

For further information please contact Sangeeta Ratna on:-

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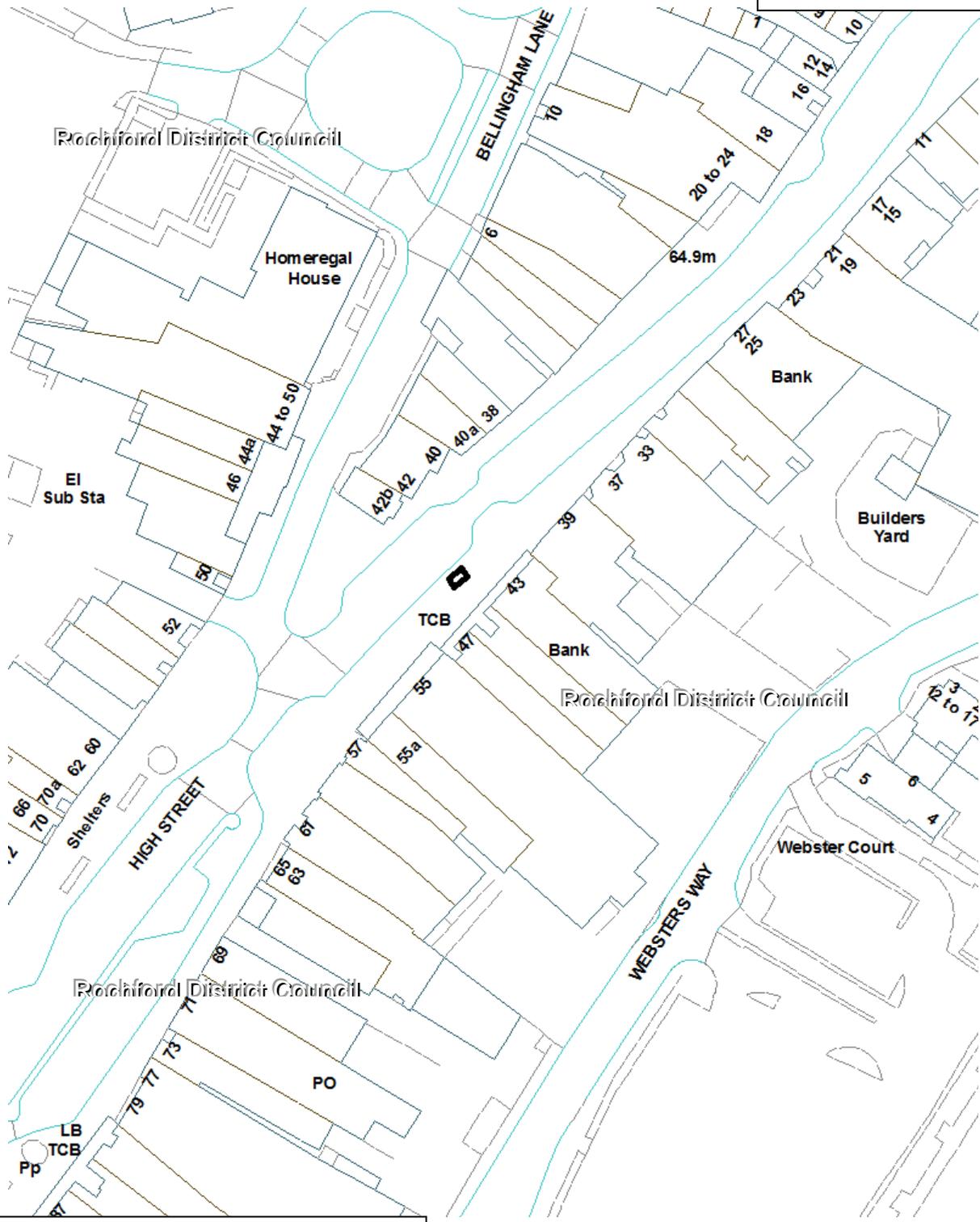
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