

Our Ref: GM/93650

Date 2 July 2021



FAO Robert Griffin
Planning Department
Manchester City Council
PO Box 532
Town Hall
Manchester
M60 2LA

BY PLANNING PORTAL ONLY

Dear Mr Griffin

PROPOSED ADVERTISEMENTS – SAINSBURY'S LOCAL LAND ON THE CORNER OF OLD MILL STREET AND GREAT ANCOATS STREET (ISLINGTON WHARF, PHASE 4), MANCHESTER, M4 6EE

We write on behalf of Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd and Waterside Places Ltd to submit an application for advertisement consent under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) (England) Regulations 2007.

The Site & Context

The site is located on the corner of Great Ancoats Street and Old Mill Street in the Ancoats area of Manchester and comprises the ground floor commercial unit of a proposed (currently under construction) part 16 and part 11 storey apartment building. The development represents phase 4 of the Islington Wharf regeneration site. The commercial unit, when constructed, will front both Great Ancoats Street and Old Mill Street but will be accessed from the elevation fronting the latter.

To the immediate south of the site is another apartment building with ground floor commercial units fronting Great Ancoats Street. These units consist of a mix of mostly Class E uses including off-licence, coffee shop, beauty salon and barbershop. To the south west of the site is the Oxygen apartment development, with further ground floor commercial units proposed. To the north of the site is a vacant plot of land, which is the site of the former Central Retail Park.

Relevant Policy

Policy DC14 of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan relates to 'Shop Fronts and Related Signs' and remains an extant policy. DC14.1 states that the Council will seek to ensure that proposals are "in keeping with the character of the building and adjoining buildings, of adjoining shopfronts, where appropriate, and of the area within which the premises are located".

DC14.5 acknowledges that the Advertisement Regulations require that applications for shop signs be considered only in the interests of amenity and public safety. In determining such applications, the council will expect that signs should usually only be positioned at fascia level; should respect the architectural form of buildings and be in scale with the frontage of the building.

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Name, Company/Organisation

Projecting box signs should line up with the associated fascia board. DC14.5(e) states that the Council will “normally permit only one projecting box sign for each shop unit”.

The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. In accordance with Paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account cumulative impacts. As described in the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) the regime is a “lighter touch” than the system for obtaining planning permission for development. The NPPG also clarifies that a local plan does not have to contain advertisement policies and that if such policies are considered necessary to protect the unique character of a particular area, these should be evidence-based.

Material Considerations

The signs have been sensitively designed so that they fulfil the requirement of Sainsbury's in identifying and advertising the presence of the store, balanced against the planning merits of not distracting from the architectural quality of the host building or the immediate neighbourhood. Rather than a traditional fascia board, Sainsbury's proposes to install individual internally illuminated acrylic lettering mounted on a discrete box-section aluminium framework above the entrance door (fronting Old Mill Street) and side window (fronting Great Ancoats Street). This ensures that the ground floor of the building is not broken with a fascia board and the continuity of the architectural design continues to flow up the building as intended. This approach accords with policy DC14.5 of the extant policies of the UDP.

Projecting signs are proposed on the corner of the building to aid in advance visibility of the store. These signs are of a ‘pedestrian-scale’, at only 75cm in depth. Although policy DC14.5(e) states that the Council will normally permit only one projecting box sign for each shop unit, it is clearly the case that the proposed Sainsbury's Local shop unit has two frontages because it is sited on the corner of Old Mill Street and Great Ancoats Street. With two frontages, it is appropriate that one projecting sign is allowed *per frontage*. The Council will be aware of a similar arrangement for the Sainsbury's Local store on the corner of Dean Street and Quay Street in the City Centre where advertisement consent was initially refused, partly on the basis that it had two projecting signs, one of each frontage of the two corner elevations. The appeal inspector, in granting advertisement consent (appeal reference APP/B4215/Z/17/3182955) for the fascia and projecting signs, recognised that the “number of signs displayed is not seen as disproportionate” (para 10). We consider that the same applies at the application site. The number of signs proposed is appropriate to the building and the corner location of the unit dictates that it should have the commercial visibility from both sides.

For completeness, we have shown the internally applied window graphics that are necessary to hide the rears of display cabinets positioned around the perimeter of the inside of the building. Signs applied to the inside of the building, even to the inside of glass, do not require express advertisement consent. Notwithstanding that, we consider that the graphics add vibrancy and interest to the ground floor elevation.

Two small externally applied vinyl signs are proposed adjacent to the entrance door. They are below the threshold (0.3sqm) at which advertisement consent is required individually, however since the regulations grant deemed consent for only one such sign on a frontage, express consent is hereby sought for the larger (opening hours) sign.

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Name, Company/Organisation

Given the discrete size of the signs and the static nature of the proposed internal illumination, the proposed advertisements are not likely to cause any distraction to motorists or pedestrians. As such, they do present any material threat to public safety.

Overall, the signs are appropriate both to the host and to the street scene, which is neither within a conservation area, close to any designated historic assets, or other notable designation, which might otherwise dictate an alternative approach.

Application Submission

Please find enclosed the following application documents:

- Completed Application forms;
- The following plans and drawings:
 - PL 2001 – Location Plan
 - PL 2002 – Existing Plans and Elevations
 - PL 2003 – Proposed Plans and Elevations
 - PI 2004 Proposed Signage Details and Shopfront

The application fee of £132 has been paid separately to the Council via the Planning Portal as part of this submission.

Summary

The application, submitted herein, seeks advertisement consent for the display of 2no internally illuminated “Sainsbury’s Local” signs and 2no internally illuminated projecting signs, one on each of the two street-elevations of the ground floor commercial unit. The signs have been designed to be sensitive to the host building and the street scene. Their proportions respect the building’s design and do not cause any material impact on amenity or public safety.

Yours sincerely

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