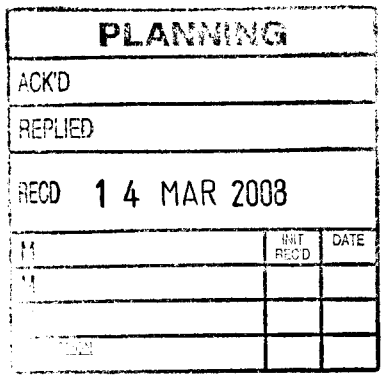

10 March 2008

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in connection with the proposed installation of the Diesel Art Wall on the side of Urbis. The Diesel Art Wall is a major contemporary art project which has been seen in a number of cities across the world since 2004. It provides a great opportunity for Manchester (and for Urbis) to be promoted across the globe, and to be linked to three other major cities (New York, Zurich and Barcelona) which will be hosting similar events. The artistic work represented is crucially provided both by an artist of international standing and by a Manchester-based artist. As you will be aware, key to the mission of Urbis is the promotion of local and regional artists, and the Art Wall will aid this substantially.

Installation of the Art Wall will aid the City Council strategy of promoting Manchester as a major international city and tourist destination worthy of note. Previous hosts have seen substantial rises in visitor numbers as a result of the attendant publicity. That Manchester is being considered as the only UK host is, in itself, indicative of the strides the city is making in terms of its cultural offer. The Art Wall is truly an original and modern method of promoting contemporary art.

Background

The Diesel Art Wall project started in 2004, under the sponsorship of the Diesel clothing brand. It aims to find and promote young creative talent. Past events have taken place in Toronto, Milan, Beijing, Copenhagen. 2008 will see events in New York, Barcelona, Zurich and Manchester. Promotion of all four walls will take place in all Diesel stores across the globe, plus an international promotional campaign in the major style and art press.

Site

Diesel Art Wall have selected Urbis to host the only wall in the UK in 2008, and thus to put Manchester on the artistic map with the other cities listed above. The winning artwork will be produced and placed on the side of the building facing Cathedral Gardens.

Product

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Urban Experience Ltd.
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Two major stages. A local/regional artist will be selected from competition entries (by a panel including Manchester's Creative Director, Mr Saville) for their work to be installed on the side of Urbis. After two months, their work will be replaced by that of an international artist (from one of the other sites).

Dates

The initial 'call to action' will go on the wall on March 30th (overnight). This will be replaced by the Manchester artist's work on 11th June, and by the international artist's work on 6th August. The ARt Wall is intended to end on 31st September.

Appearance

As in attached jpeg, no materials will protrude from the side of Urbis as the vinyl will act as a second skin to the glass panels. Each image will be constructed as a series of "pixilations" utilizing each window panel and using Contravision perforated vinyl. This is a specific type of vinyl which is able to be viewed from the outside but allows those inside the building to see out unhindered. This is also important from a light perspective within the building. This patented product has been used in numerous high profile and iconic locations to great effect.

Technique

The graphic will effectively be 'peel-on, peel-off' so will have no impact on the building's fabric. The Contravision process was developed in tandem with Urbis, and COntravision used Urbis as their example process on their patent application.

Advertising

Diesel will not be including their logo on any Diesel Wall artworks, though there will be a link to the art project's website www.dieselwall.com. The project is not supported by any additional corporate sponsor. For the purposes of communicating to the general public what they're looking at, Urbis will installation an explanation panel at ground level near the entrance to The Social. Both the logos of Urbis and Diesel will sit on this panel roughly A0 in size.

Management Strategy

With the Contravision Perforated Vinyl being designed for external use its durability throughout each two month exhibition run will be safe. However, Urbis will communicate any damages or necessary repair works to Diesel who are ultimately responsible for ensuring that any repairs/maintenance works are carried out within an agreed time frame. This will be written into the agreement between Diesel and Urbis

Installation

Will be carried out overnight, with the standard Urbis operating procedures and award-winning H&S management in place.

Relationship to other events

The Art Wall will provide a focus for cultural activity in the North of the city, and complement the exhibitions within the building, and help promote the other artistic venues in the city. Other areas of Manchester (eg Spinningfields) are already eager to get involved. No final decisions have been taken on use of Cathedral Gardens over the summer, but family and artistic activities will be at the core of these during the day--the Art Wall will provide an excellent backdrop.

For both Urbis and the city, the installation of the Art Wall will provide major promotion. In the 'off year' of the International Festival, it provides an opportunity to continue the impressive press coverage of the Manchester cultural offer seen during 2007. Given the issues around the Cathedral Gardens area, the influx of new tourists (Milan 2007 saw 10,000 extra tourists per month as a result of installation) will help change the profile of the visitors to the area, thereby helping to reduce anti-social activity. It should also boost perceptions of the city as a cultural destination. Linking with Peter Saville, as the city's creative director, the Art Wall will embody the 'Original Modern' mission.

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Vaughan Allen
Chief Exec, Urbis.

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