MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no.	143517/AO/2025
Date registered valid:	22 July 2025
Proposal:	1no. internally illuminated individual letter sign.
Address:	Aviva Studios (Formerly Factory International) , Water Street, Manchester, M3 4JQ
Ward(s):	Deansgate Ward
Applicant:	Ms Jane Hector-Jones Factory International
Agent (if any):	Mr Ivan Carless Ascot Signs
Case officer:	Lea Joseph Tel: 0161 227 3644 Email: lea.joseph@manchester.gov.uk
Recommendation:	**Approve**
Date of recommendation:	**01 September 2025**

Application details

Type of application: Advertisement Consent

Development type: Advertisements

Date of site visit: 6 August 2025

Standard consultations:
Printed: 30 July 2025 Expired: 20 August 2025

Neighbour notifications
Printed: 30 July 2025 Expired: 20 August 2025

Site notice
No site notice has been produced

Press advert
No press advert had been published

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

Listed building: Grade II

Conservation area: Castlefield Conservation Area 1979

Tree Preservation Order:

Aviva Studios is a multifunctional creative space that hosts a range of activities including theatre, music, dance, art, other performance and non-performance related events, exhibitions and conferences (Sui Generis) with ancillary facilities including retail exhibitions and conferences (Sui Generis) with ancillary facilities including retail and bar uses (Class E), offices, administrative and back of house functions (Class E), training and educational facilities (Class F.1).

The site is bounded by Goods Yard Street, Water Street and the River Irwell.




WELCOME TO
AVIVA studios
home of
factory
FESTIVAL SQ.

Description of area

Aviva Studios is located within the St. John's area within the Castlefield Conservation Area. The building forms part of a regeneration of the former ITV Granada Studios site. The area is defined by contemporary mixed-use developments, largely characterised by restaurants, bars and office uses. The area surrounding Aviva Studios is pedestrianised with a variety of outdoor seating. Recent developments within the area include the Bonded Warehouse, an office, bar and events venue and Manchester Goods Yard, a mixed-use office building which includes bar, restaurant and leisure uses.

East of St. John's is the Bonded Warehouse and Grape Street. The Museum of Science and Industry (MSI) complex is south east and includes the 1830 Warehouse (Grade I listed) and Cast Iron Viaduct (Grade II). Hampson Street, Water Street and Liverpool Road are to the south. The area is just West of the River Irwell and the boundary with the City of Salford. To the north is the Manchester and Salford Junction Canal, Marriott Hotel and Water Street. Further north is Quay Street and Spinningfields.

Description of development

Advertisement consent is sought for the installation of no.1 fascia sign. The sign would be composed of aluminium lettering and include internal LED illumination.



Planning History
137969/AO/2023 | Installation of 3 x illuminated signs (Approved September 2023).

Consultations & Notification Responses

Publicity
Letters have been sent out to local businesses and residents. No representations have been received.

Highway Services – No objections. Proposed luminance of 300cd/m2 is considered acceptable. Pedestrian management and scaffolding informative requested.

Environmental Health – No objections. Proposed luminance of 300cd/m2 is considered acceptable.

Policy

Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007

The Local planning authority shall exercise its powers under these Regulations in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account—

(a)the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material; and

(b)any other relevant factors.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1)(b)—

(a)factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest;

(b)factors relevant to public safety include—

(i)the safety of persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);

(ii)whether the display of the advertisement in question is likely to obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air;

(iii)whether the display of the advertisement in question is likely to hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.

(3) In taking account of factors relevant to amenity, the local planning authority may, if it thinks fit, disregard any advertisement that is being displayed.

(4) Unless it appears to the local planning authority to be required in the interests of amenity or public safety, an express consent for the display of advertisements shall not contain any limitation or restriction relating to the subject matter, content or design of what is to be displayed

The policies relevant to consideration of this application are as follows:

Save Unitary Development Plan Policies
DC14 Shop Fronts and Related Signs
DC18 Conservation Areas

Manchester Core Strategy (2012-2027)
SP1 Spatial Principles
CC4 Visitors – Tourism, Culture and Leisure

Other Material Considerations:

National Planning Policy Framework
Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Paragraph 141 states:

The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

Shopfront and Signage Design Guide

Issues

Design Issues – relationship to context and impact on the character of the Conservation Area

Policy DM1 outlines the importance of layout, materials, detail and siting in development Considerations. Policy DC14 mandates that new signage proposals 'respect' architectural form of their premises. The Shopfront and Signage Design Guide section 6.3 requires that signage proposals 'should be the minimal require to identify the premises in size, number and impact.'

The appearance and design of the signage takes precedence from the previously approved high-level signage. The choice of high-quality individual letters meets the requirements of the Shopfront and Signage Design Guide. The contemporary design matches that of the building and the scale in considered to be commensurate to the elevation. The appearance positively relates to the architectural form and character of the building. Further, the design and illumination would be subtle and therefore unobtrusive within the street scene. As such the proposal meets policies DC14, SP1 and Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The proposal would be sited on an elevation that does not currently have signage. As the tenants have begun to occupy the sites surrounding Aviva Studios new pedestrian access routes to the Studio have been formed, this sign would be sited to face Good Yards Street.

Saved Unitary Development Plan policy DC 18.1 outlines the importance of preserving and enhancing the character of Conservation Areas.

The St. John's district has a distinct contemporary character that differs from that of other areas within the Conservation Area. The regeneration goals expressed in the St. John's neighbourhood framework are for a dynamic, liveable area with mixed uses and a vibrant leisure and cultural offer. As such contemporary signage is not out of place in this area. There

are no Listed Buildings in the sightline of the development. Given the above, the simple, considered design is not considered to be harmful to the amenity or character of the Conservation Area.

Other Legislative Requirements
Equality Act 2010
Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and; Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

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

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 development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents:

Drawing: AVI-12809-ASC-000002 (Received 22 July 2025)
Drawing: AVI-12809-ASC-000003 (Received 22 July 2025)
Drawing: AVI-12809-ASC-000004 (Received 22 July 2025)
Drawing: AVI-12809-ASC-000006 (Received 22 July 2025)

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. Pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

3) The maximum luminance of the signage shall not exceed 300 cd/m2 in brightness at any time.
Reason - In the interests of visual and residential amenity pursuant to policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services
Environmental Health

Chaos Karts, Lower Byrom Street, Manchester, M3 4AP
Factory, 161 Water Street, Manchester, M3 4JQ
The Crystal Maze, Lower Byrom Street, Manchester, M3 4AP
Bonded Warehouse, 18 Lower Byrom Street, Manchester, M3 4AP

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - City Centre PD Restriction - Class B1(a) To C3
Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Coal Authority - Development Low Risk - Name: DEVELOPMENT_LOW_RISK_AREA
Conservation Area - Castlefield Conservation Area 1979
Flood Zones Type 2 (low to medium risk) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL