

158 Cheetham Hill Road, Manchester, M8 8LQ

Planning Statement

August 2025

Introduction & Site Context

This planning statement accompanies an application seeking advertisement consent for the display of two free-standing signs at 158 Cheetham Hill Road, which is currently a vacant parcel of land, identified by the red pointer in the image below.



Figure 1: Application site - Google Earth

The application site comprises a corner plot site, with Derby Street, fronting Cheetham Hill Road (A665) within a highly active and commercially focused area characterised by a diverse mix of wholesale outlets, light industrial premises, vehicle repair workshops, storage facilities, and various service businesses.

The immediate surroundings include a dense concentration of services, business and shop activity, with numerous takeaways, restaurants, offices, and other commercial uses. The overall character of the locality is defined by utilitarian architecture, and a strong presence of businesses catering to both trade customers and the general public.

The application site is shown in the image below.

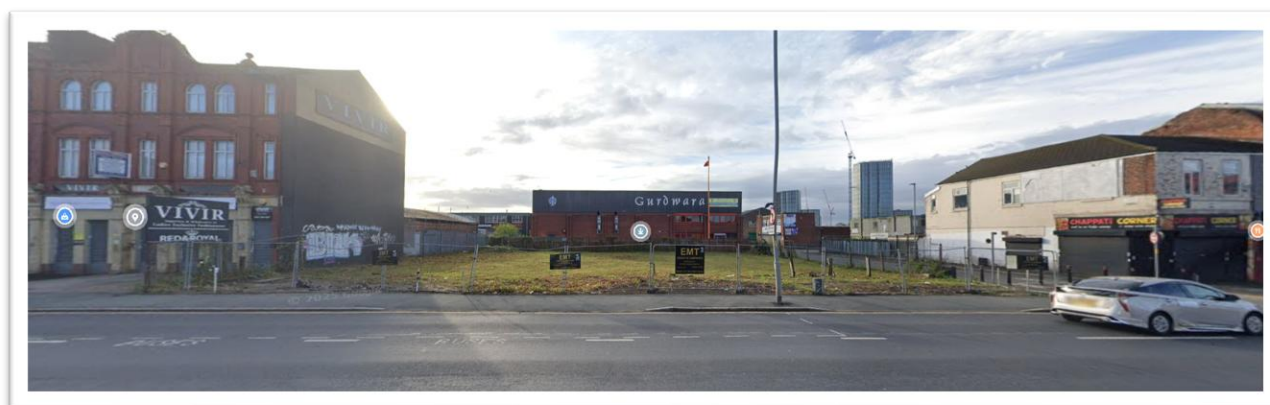


Figure 2: Application site - Google Maps

The application site occupies a cleared parcel of land fronting Cheetham Hill Road in a prominent position between existing commercial buildings of varying scale and appearance. To the left stands a substantial three-storey red brick Victorian property incorporating retail units at ground floor level, which features large fascia signs, printed banners, and a substantial painted advertisement on the gable end, all contributing to a strong visual presence onto the street.

Immediately to the right is a two-storey commercial building with active ground floor uses, including the takeaway premises “Chappati Corner,” which prominently displays fascia signage and window graphics. Directly behind the site sits the large brick-built Gurdwara, whose bold lettering in contrasting colours and large symbolic iconography create a highly legible and visually prominent landmark within the streetscene.

The wider Cheetham Hill Road corridor is defined by a pronounced commercial character where a wide range of signage, including large format fascias, projecting signs, hoardings, painted wall adverts, and illuminated displays, are integral to the identity of the area. Many premises utilise vivid colours, large-scale text, and LED lighting to attract attention in this high-traffic environment.

As such, signage of various scales and materials is commonplace, forming a defining element of the streetscape’s visual language and reinforcing the mixed commercial and retail function of the locality.

Proposal

Description

Advertisement consent is sought for the display of two x free standing LED signs. The proposed signage would have a maximum height of 8m, including a 2m poll as a foundation, each sign would measure a maximum of 3.8m in width.

The proposed plans are shown below.

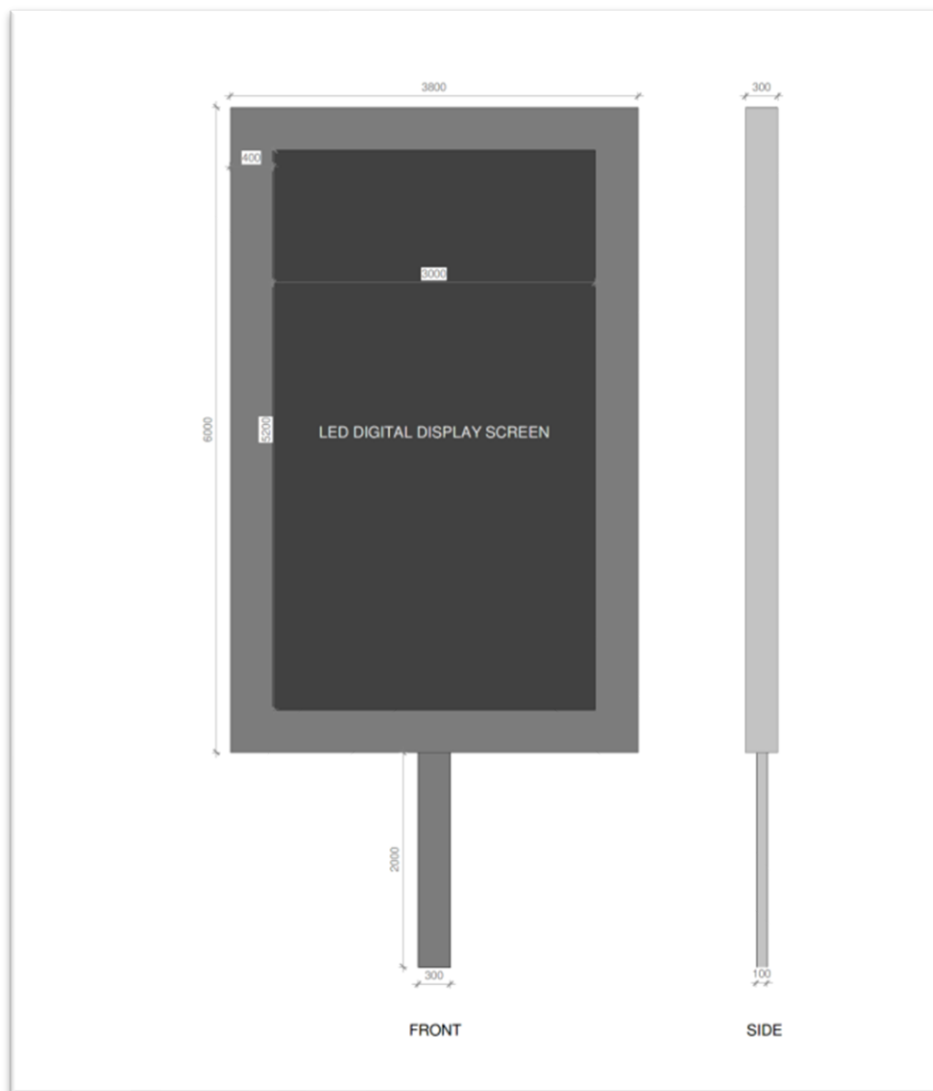


Figure 3: Proposed plans

The proposed signs will be sited on each corner of the site facing Cheetham Hill Road, as shown in the image below.

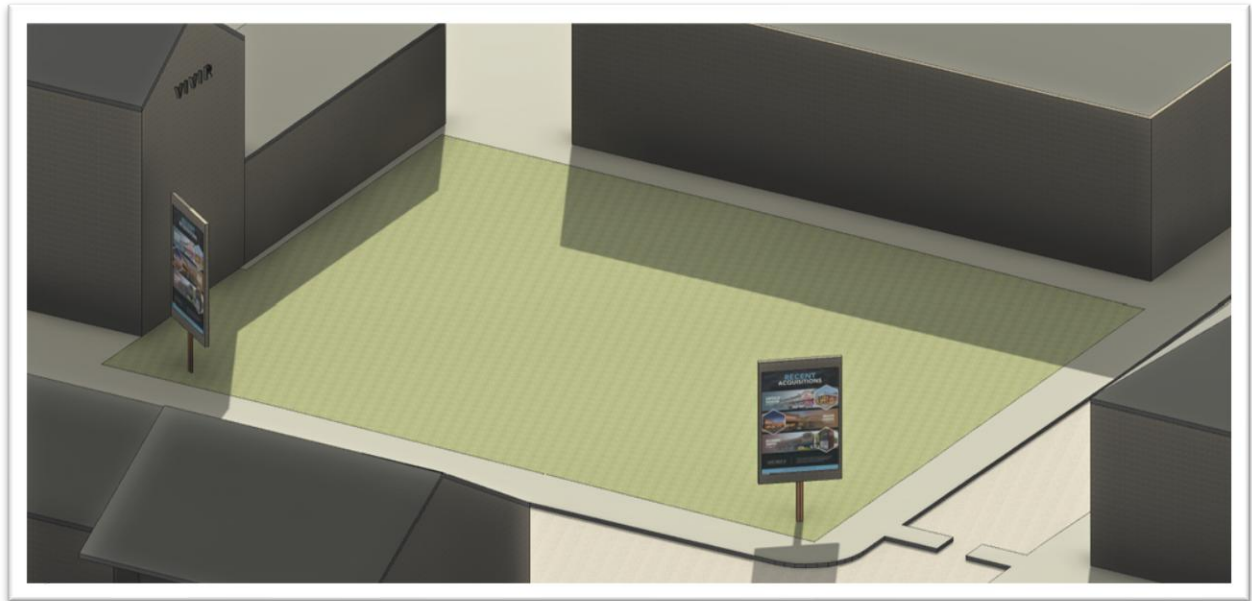


Figure 4: Proposed sign location

Planning Policy Framework

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

Local Planning Policies

Places for Everyone (2022-2039) – Places for Everyone is a long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth. It has been published by the GMCA on behalf of the nine districts and took effect and became part of the statutory development plan on March 21, 2024.

The PfE Plan and its policies are now a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. The PfE Plan and its policies must therefore be given full weight in the planning balance.

The relevant Places for Everyone policies for this application are as follows:

- JP-S1 – Sustainable Development
- JP-P1 – Sustainable Places
- JP-J1 – Supporting Long Term Economic Growth
- JP-J4 – Industry and Warehousing Development

Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012-2027) - The Core Strategy was adopted on the 11 July 2012 and replaces a large number of policies in Manchester's Unitary Development Plan. Parts of the policies have been superseded by the Places for Everyone Plan.

The relevant Core Strategy policies for this application are as follows:

- DM 1 – Development Management
- SP 1 – Spatial Principles (partially superseded by PfE)
- EC 4 – North Manchester
- C3 – North Manchester District Centres – Cheetham Hill and Harpurhey

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) for the City of Manchester (1995) - The Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester was adopted in 1995 and has largely been replaced with the policies contained within the Core Strategy. However, there are a number of policies that are extant.

The relevant saved UDP policies for this application are:

- CC10 – Industrial and Commercial uses

The relevant supplementary planning guidance documents for this application are:

- The Guide to Development in Manchester SPD

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

The NPPF sets out broad national policies on themes such as housing, historic environment, town centres, design, climate change and the Green Belt. Central to the broad policy direction contained within the NPPF is the notion of sustainable development; development which effectively balances economic, social and environmental factors. The following sections are relevant to this proposal:

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy

Section 11 – Making effective use of land

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Site History

The Google Maps images below show the large signage boards that were located at the application site, providing a strong precedent for the proposal.



Figure 5: Sept 2008



Figure 6: June 2009



Figure 7: May 2011



Figure 8: Sept 2012



Figure 9: July 2014

Appraisal

Principle

The principle of installing two freestanding LED advertisements at 158 Cheetham Hill Road is acceptable. The site is located within a highly active commercial corridor where advertisement signage plays a central role in the economic and visual identity of the area. Historically, the application site has hosted significantly larger signage boards for a sustained period, as demonstrated in archival Google Maps imagery from 2008 to 2014. This establishes a strong precedent for signage on the plot and confirms its long-standing use as a commercial advertising site.

The proposal aligns with this precedent and reinforces the ongoing commercial function of the Cheetham Hill Road frontage. Within the planning policy framework, both national and local policy supports the sustainable reuse of previously developed land, particularly where proposals complement existing land uses. Subject to considerations relating to amenity and public safety, the proposed development is appropriate and policy-compliant in principle.

Visual Amenity

The proposed signage consists of two freestanding LED display panels, each up to 8m high (including the support pole) and 3.8m wide, positioned prominently at the corners of the cleared site fronting Cheetham Hill Road. This form and scale of signage reflect the established commercial streetscape of the area, which features a mix of fascia signs, gable-end advertisements, projecting signs, and illuminated hoardings.

The visual character of the immediate area is defined by a utilitarian built form, punctuated by bold commercial branding. Neighbouring properties, including the adjacent takeaway, Chappati Corner, and the Victorian retail block, exhibit large-scale, vibrant signage. Further, the presence of the nearby Gurdwara with its symbolic and high-contrast iconography adds to the layered and expressive visual language of the street.

Given the historic presence of large signage boards on the site and the consistency of the proposed design with the prevailing commercial vernacular, the signage will not appear intrusive or out of place. The signs are purposefully sited to avoid visual conflict with adjacent buildings and contribute positively to the legibility and vibrancy of the commercial frontage. Accordingly, the proposals are not considered to result in visual harm or create clutter within the street scene.

Public safety

The proposed advertisements have been carefully designed to maintain public and highway safety. Positioned with appropriate setbacks from the pavement and carriageway, they avoid any obstruction to visibility for road users or pedestrians. Static illumination at a level of 300cd/m² ensures compliance with highway safety standards and avoids glare or distraction.

The scale and form of the signs will not obscure traffic signals, street furniture, or surveillance systems. Additionally, as freestanding structures on a cleared plot, there is no intervention with building facades or risk of structural interference with adjacent premises. The installation process will involve minimal on-site works, ensuring low impact and no disruption to neighbouring operations or the public realm.

In this context, it is concluded that the proposed signage poses no risk to public safety and adheres to the relevant considerations under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007.

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 policies 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.

Conclusion

This proposal presents a sustainable and justified form of development that reactivates a vacant, cleared commercial plot through the reintroduction of freestanding signage, consistent with the site's historical use and the wider commercial character of Cheetham Hill Road. The signs are modest in form relative to the scale of signage prevalent in the area and are appropriately located and designed to integrate with the streetscape.

Key benefits of the scheme include:

- Reinforcement of the site's historic function as a signage location;
- Support for the visibility and economic vitality of the Cheetham Hill commercial corridor;
- No adverse impact on local amenity or public safety;
- Full compliance with the development plan, including the Places for Everyone Plan and the NPPF 2024.

There is a clear alignment between the proposal and the strategic goals for efficient land use, sustainable economic development, and context-sensitive design. In light of the above, it is respectfully requested that advertisement consent be granted without delay.