



Report:

Proposal:

Application Site:

Applicant:

Applicant Address:

Council:

Date:

PLANNING STATEMENT

Advertisement Consent for Temporary Display of an Externally Illuminated Shroud Advertisement

Fraser House, 36 Charlotte Street, Manchester, M1 4FD

King Media Ltd

1st Floor, Sackville House, 143-149 Fenchurch Street, London, EC3M 6BN

Manchester City Council

21/08/2025

ARMSTRONG PLANNING

1. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Armstrong Planning have been retained by King Media Ltd (the applicant) to prepare and submit this application for advertisement consent at Fraser House, 36 Charlotte Street, Manchester, M1 4FD (the application site).

This is a proposal for the temporary display of an externally illuminated shroud advertisement measuring 28.9m wide x 10.3m high, for a period of 4 months until 31st December 2025. The proposal seeks to deliver multiple benefits: facilitating essential conservation works to this Grade II Listed Building, protecting the visual amenity of the George Street Conservation Area during the construction period, and generating vital funding for the comprehensive restoration of this important heritage asset.

We maintain that the proposal represents a carefully balanced response to the practical challenges of undertaking significant restoration works within a prominent city centre location. Critical consideration has been given to the conservation context, and we have ensured that the commercial element remains subordinate to the primary objective of preserving and enhancing this listed building.

2. SITE CONTEXT AND PLANNING HISTORY

2.1 The Application Site

The application site comprises a four-storey over basement commercial building located at the prominent junction of Charlotte Street and Portland Street. We note that the property holds Grade II Listed status and falls within the George Street Conservation Area, designations which we have carefully considered in formulating this proposal. The site is situated within Manchester City Centre, characterised by its vibrant commercial activity and dense urban grain.

We would point out that the surrounding context is distinctly commercial in character, with numerous examples of commercial signage and advertising displays forming part of the established streetscape. This commercial vibrancy provides an appropriate context for the temporary advertisement proposed, particularly given its role in facilitating the building's restoration.

2.2 Background and Planning History

We understand that establishing the context for this application requires a thorough appreciation of the site's recent history and the applicant's sustained efforts to facilitate the building's restoration. We therefore provide the following chronology to demonstrate the genuine commitment to bringing this heritage asset back into productive use.

The property is owned by the Low Family under Chan Hong Property Management Ltd, who have been working with King Media since 2019 to secure the necessary funding for essential maintenance works. We note that KPS Architects were initially appointed to obtain Listed Building Consent and prepare a comprehensive works programme for rot repairs, with Mather Ellis subsequently contracted in 2021 to undertake these works.

We would respectfully draw attention to the previous advertisement consent application (Ref: 142314/AOH/2025) submitted in March 2025, which was withdrawn when works temporarily ceased whilst the building owner and their contractors resolved matters with the Council's Conservation Department regarding materials and methodology. We are pleased to confirm that these matters have now been successfully resolved to the satisfaction of the Conservation Department, and works

have recommenced on site. The submitted project programme demonstrates the contractor's commitment to a defined timescale for completion.

Furthermore, we must emphasise the constraints that affected the previous consent period. The 2022 application for temporary advertisement consent experienced significant delays, with the Council's decision not issued until April 2023. This delay, combined with the subsequent requirement to obtain highway licenses, reduced the practical advertisement display period to merely eight months of the twelve-month consent. We respectfully ask that this context be given due weight in determining the current application, particularly as the advertisement was displayed for only 154 days out of 365 days (approximately 11 advertising campaigns) during the previous consent period.

3. THE PROPOSAL

3.1 Description of Development

We propose the installation of a high-quality illustrated scaffold shroud depicting a 1:1 facsimile of the building facade, within which will be set a static, externally illuminated advertisement. The shroud will measure 28.9m wide x 10.3m high and will remain in place only for the duration of Phase 1 programme of works for the essential restoration works, with removal guaranteed upon completion no later than 31st December 2025.

We have carefully designed the proposal to ensure that the commercial advertisement occupies just 36% of the scaffolded elevation. This deliberate proportion ensures that the building's architectural form will be read first and foremost, with the advertisement appearing as a clearly secondary and subordinate feature. The remaining 64% of the shroud will display the graphic illustration of the building facade, thereby maintaining the visual integrity of the streetscape during the works period.

3.2 Quality and Maintenance

We submit that the illustrated shroud will consist of premium-grade materials specifically designed for heritage contexts, and we commit to maintaining these to the highest standards throughout the display period. King Media Ltd, trading as Maximus, brings extensive experience in delivering commercially sponsored illustrated shrouds that have demonstrably enhanced the public realm during construction projects across the UK. The submitted brochure 'Enhancing the Urban Landscape' provides compelling evidence of this track record.

4. PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT

4.1 National Planning Policy Framework

We note that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as revised in December 2024, establishes clear parameters for advertisement applications. Paragraph 141 confirms that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety. We respectfully submit that our proposal fully satisfies both these tests, as we demonstrate below.

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides further clarity, with Section 18b-001-20140306 confirming that the display of advertisements is subject to a lighter touch regime than standard planning applications. Crucially, Paragraph 18b-005 specifically addresses shroud advertisements, stating that buildings undergoing major structural work with scaffolding may be considered suitable as temporary sites for shroud advertisements. We maintain that our proposal directly aligns with this guidance, representing precisely the type of development the PPG anticipates and supports.

4.2 Local Plan Compliance

Having regard to Manchester's planning policy framework, we have carefully considered both the Core Strategy (adopted July 2012) and the relevant saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan. We particularly draw attention to Policy DC15.1, which addresses advertisements, hoardings and posters, and sets out specific criteria against which proposals should be assessed.

We submit that our proposal positively addresses each criterion within Policy DC15.1. Specifically, we demonstrate that:

The proposal will make a positive contribution to the locality by screening unsightly scaffolding and building works whilst generating funding for heritage restoration. The design of the shroud structure has been carefully conceived to relate sympathetically to the listed building, with the 1:1 facsimile ensuring the building's presence is maintained within the streetscape. The temporary nature of the display ensures no impact on permanent redevelopment, whilst the professional-grade materials and maintenance regime guarantee the structure will be satisfactorily maintained throughout its limited duration.

Furthermore, we have given careful consideration to Policy DC18.1 concerning Conservation Areas. We maintain that the proposal preserves and enhances the character of the George Street Conservation Area by ensuring that necessary scaffolding does not detract from the area's visual quality during the restoration period. The relationship of the temporary structure to neighbouring buildings has been carefully considered, with the 1:1 facsimile maintaining the established building line and architectural rhythm of the street.

5. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS

5.1 Visual Amenity

We respectfully submit that the impact on visual amenity must be assessed against the baseline condition that would exist without the proposed shroud – namely, exposed scaffolding, protective sheeting, and visible construction works. The images provided within our submission clearly demonstrate the negative visual impact that unscreened scaffolding creates within urban conservation areas.

In this context, we maintain that the proposed advertisement-bearing shroud will deliver a significant net benefit to visual amenity. The high-quality 1:1 building facsimile will maintain the visual coherence of the streetscape, whilst the limited commercial element (36% of the facade) will be consistent with the area's commercial character. We would particularly emphasise that when advertising space is unsold – typically 50% of the display period – the full building imagery will be visible, further reducing any visual impact.

The commercial nature of the surrounding area, with its established presence of signage and advertising, provides an appropriate context for this temporary display. We note that the vibrant commercial character of this part of the city centre has long accommodated advertising as part of its urban grain, and our proposal sits comfortably within this established context.

The images below show the potential negative visual impact of generic scaffolding without an advertisement bearing shroud.

Fig 1: Example of visual impact of scaffolding at Addington Street, South Bank, London

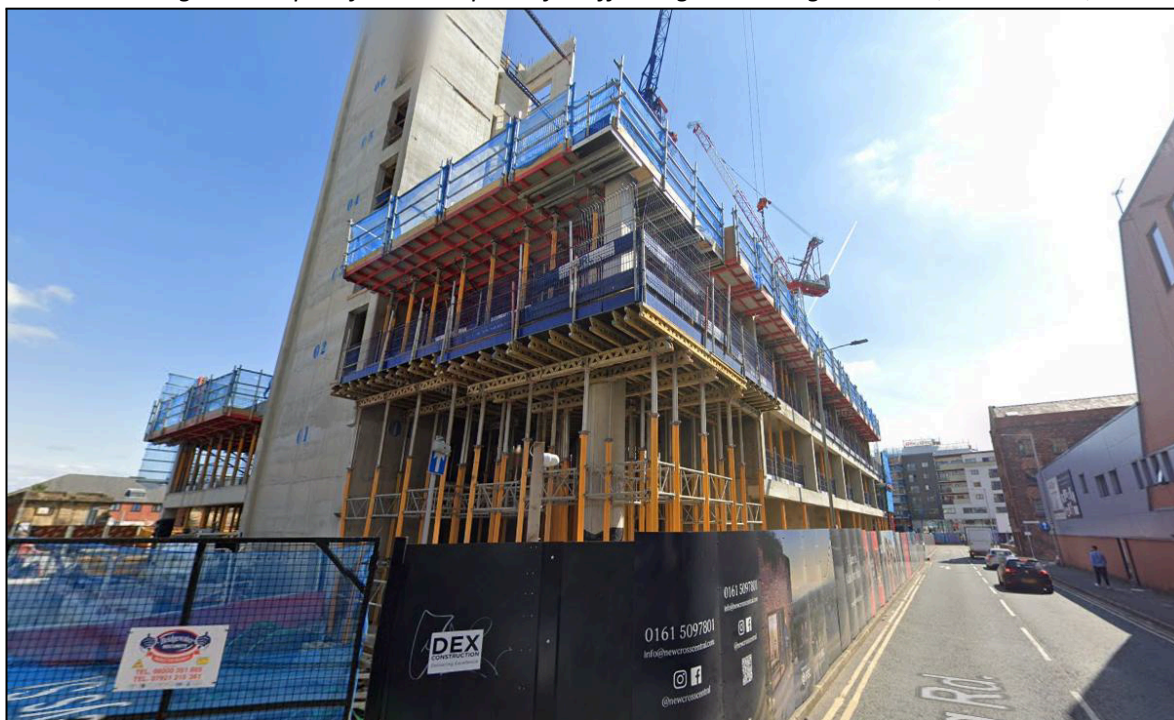


Fig 2: Example of negative impact of scaffolding on the street scene at Camberwell Green, London



The building owner has partnered with applicant, King Media Ltd (trading as Maximus), who have a proven record in assisting landowners in upgrading their properties by subsidising refurbishment and redevelopment projects. Please see the brochure 'Enhancing the Urban Landscape' which is submitted as part of this application and showcases some examples of how Maximus's commercially

sponsored illustrated shrouds have delivered real benefits to the public realm. This positive impact on visual amenity is long lasting and should be considered in addition to temporary benefits of screening unsightly scaffolding and building works. The images below are examples of smartly screened building sites managed by King Media Ltd in London.

Fig 3: Example of the aesthetic benefit afforded by a shroud at Wellington House, Piccadilly, Manchester



Fig 4: Example of the aesthetic benefit afforded by a scaffold shroud in Farringdon, London.

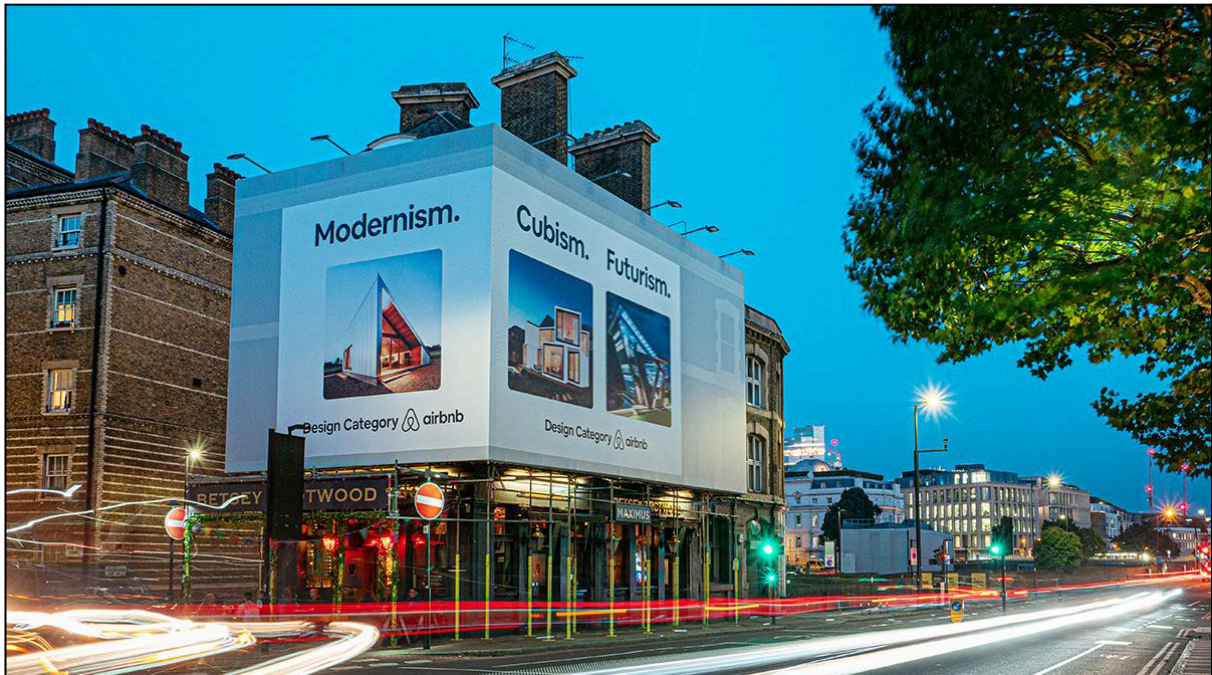


Fig 5: Example of the aesthetic benefit afforded by a scaffold shroud In Covent Garden, London.



5.2 Heritage Considerations

We have taken full cognisance of the heritage context, recognising the building's Grade II listing and location within a conservation area. We submit that the proposal will cause no physical harm to the fabric of the listed building, with all fixings to the independent scaffold structure. Any visual impact will be purely temporary and reversible, lasting only for the duration of the essential works.

Crucially, we would emphasise that the proposal directly facilitates the long-term preservation of this heritage asset. The funding generated through the temporary advertisement will enable comprehensive restoration works that will secure the building's future for generations to come. We respectfully suggest that this substantial public benefit should be given significant weight in the planning balance.

5.3 Public Safety

In terms of highway safety, Section 7 of the Planning Practice Guidance accompanying the NPPF concerns considerations affecting public safety. Section 18b-067 states that there are less likely to be road safety problems if *“the advertisement is on a site within a commercial or industrial locality, if it is a shop fascia sign, name-board, trade or business sign, or a normal poster panel, and if the advertisement is not on the skyline”*. The proposed advertisement fully meets these criteria being a normal poster panel in a commercial area and not protruding into the skyline.

Section 18b-068 of the Practice Guidance sets out a list of the kind of adverts that *“may cause a danger to road users”*, none of which apply to the proposed advertisement, which will not do any of the following:

- Obstruct or impair sight-lines
- Obstruct or confuse a road user's view
- Reduce the clarity or effectiveness of any traffic sign
- Be likely to distract road users because of their unusual nature (a banner advertisement is not in and of itself an unusual feature)
- Leave insufficient clearance above any part of the highway
- Include moving or apparently moving elements
- Require close study
- Resemble traffic signs
- Embody directional or other traffic elements

Having regard to public safety considerations in summary, we confirm that the proposal fully satisfies the relevant tests set out in the Planning Practice Guidance. The advertisement will not obstruct or impair sight-lines, will not confuse or distract road users, and will not reduce the clarity of any traffic signs. As a static display in a commercial area below the skyline, it falls squarely within the category of advertisements that the PPG recognises as unlikely to cause road safety problems. We have ensured that the proposal avoids all the characteristics identified in Section 18b-068 of the PPG as potentially dangerous to road users. The advertisement is not unusual in this commercial context, contains no moving elements, requires no close study, and maintains clear separation from the highway. This type of advertisement display is designed to be readily assimilated and understood by road users and pedestrians. We therefore maintain that the proposal presents no threat to public safety.

6. WIDER BENEFITS AND MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

We would respectfully draw attention to the broader economic and social benefits that flow from this proposal. Commercial sponsorship projects of this nature create substantial economic multiplier

effects, stimulating activity across the construction, creative, and professional services sectors. The chain of agencies, creatives, and technical professionals involved in delivering such projects all contribute to Manchester's thriving creative economy.

Furthermore, we note that commercial advertisements constitute rateable assets, thereby contributing to local government finances through business rates. This direct fiscal benefit supplements the indirect economic benefits of facilitating the building's restoration and eventual return to productive use.

The partnership between the building owner and King Media represents a pragmatic and proven model for funding heritage restoration in challenging economic circumstances. Without this commercial element, the illustrated shroud would be financially unviable, leaving the scaffolding exposed and the restoration works potentially delayed or scaled back.

7. CONCLUSION

In summary, we respectfully submit that this application for temporary advertisement consent represents a carefully balanced proposal that serves multiple legitimate objectives. The primary purpose – facilitating essential restoration works to a Grade II Listed Building – aligns directly with local and national planning policy objectives for heritage preservation.

We maintain that the proposal will deliver demonstrable benefits to visual amenity by screening construction works that would otherwise negatively impact the conservation area. The commercial element has been deliberately limited to 36% of the facade, ensuring it remains subordinate to the building representation and appropriate to the commercial character of the city centre location.

We have demonstrated full compliance with both national and local planning policies, particularly the specific provisions for shroud advertisements in the Planning Practice Guidance and the criteria set out in Policies DC15.1 and DC18.1. The proposal presents no threat to public safety and will be maintained to the highest standards throughout its temporary display period.

Having regard to the constrained period of actual use during the previous consent, we respectfully request that the Council recognises the genuine commitment to restoring this important heritage asset and the vital role that this temporary advertisement plays in achieving that objective.

List of Submitted Documents:

- Location Plan
- Site Plan
- Existing Southeast Elevation
- Existing Northeast Elevation
- Proposed Southeast Elevation
- Proposed Northeast Elevation
- Standard Specifications
- Existing View Photomontage
- Proposed View Photomontage
- Cross-Section Details
- Schedule of Works
- Schedule of Works (Phase 2)
- Tender Clarifications
- Contract Drawings
- Signed Contract of Works



- Discharge of Planning Conditions
- Project Programme
- Phase 1 Scope of Works
- Lighting Specifications
- Enhancing the Urban Landscape - King Media Ltd Trading as Maximus Maximise' Brochure

We trust that the Planning Department has sufficient information to determine this application favourably, and we look forward to a positive decision that will enable these important restoration works to proceed with the necessary financial support. Should any additional information be required, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Prepared by,

DAVID ARMSTRONG BA MRUP MIPI MRTPI

For and on behalf of Armstrong Planning Ltd
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