MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

# Planning

## Growth & Development

## Delegated officer report for planning application

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| **Application no.** | 143215/AO/2025 |
| **Date registered valid:** | 15 July 2025 |
| **Proposal:** | Installation of 1 internally and 1 externally illuminated fascia sign |
| **Address:** | 453 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 4AN |
| **Ward(s):** | Withington Ward |
| **Applicant:** | Mr M Hadi Barman |
| **Agent (if any):** | Mr M Hadi Barman, Barel Architecture Ltd |
| **Case officer:** | Holly Wright<br>Tel: 0161 219 6381<br>Email: holly.wright@manchester.gov.uk |
| **Recommendation:** | Refuse |
| **Date of recommendation:** | **1 September 2025** |

## Application details

**Type of application:** Advertisement Consent

**Development type:** Advertisements

**Date of site visit:** 31 July 2025

**Standard consultations:** Printed: 23 July 2025 Expired: 13 August 2025

**Neighbour notifications:** Printed: 23 July 2025 Expired: 13 August 2025

**Site notice:** Posted: 31 July 2025 Expired: 21 August 2025

**Press advert:** Published: 29 July 2023 Expired: 19 August 2023

**Departure from Development Plan:** No

**Environmental Statement:** Not required

## Description of site/building

**Listed building:** Not applicable

**Conservation area:** Withington Conservation Area 1983

**Tree Preservation Order:** Not applicable

The application relates to a two-storey mid-terraced modern property situated along a traditional high street in the Withington Conservation Area. The property is currently vacant but was formerly occupied by Lloyds Bank. Prior to unauthorised works taking place, the property featured a modern aluminium framed shopfront to the ground floor and large first floor horizontally proportioned first floor windows. The property has little architectural merit, however, exhibited some consistency at ground floor level with the shopfronts on the adjacent properties.

As previously noted, the application property is located within the Withington Conservation Area. Withington Conservation Area evolved primarily in the 19th century, centred on the village high street. Characterised by its architectural quality and variety, cultural vibrancy, and mixed uses, it is defined by a townscape of civic buildings, public houses, churches, banks, and a mix of grand and smaller-scale domestic dwellings that tell the story of the area’s growth and continued vitality.


ISTANBUL
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SOUTHSI
MEXICO


SOUTHSIDE
3 PINTS + FREE
CHIPS & DIPS
ISTANBUL
Restaurant









## Description of development

The application seeks advertisement consent for:

- A fascia sign comprising rust-effect aluminium lettering with concealed amber LED backlighting mounted within an arched recess above the entrance;
- An internally illuminated silhouette figure mounted above the lettering, constructed as a lightweight aluminium box sign with translucent acrylic face.

Both signs are proposed to be installed above fascia level, directly onto the rendered surface of the building's front elevation.

## Consultations & Notification Responses

No representations received from local residents.

A letter of objection was received from **Councillor Chris Wills, Councillor Angela Gartside, Councillor Gavin White,** and **Councillor Becky Chambers**; the comments are summarised as follows:

- Lack of detail contained within the planning submission.
- Frontage has become poor since Lloyds has vacated the premises, however, the way everything has been completely ripped out, including the frontage, is shocking.
- Withington is at the heart of a Conservation Area and indeed has a shop front guide which all new businesses are expected to work with, in order to ensure that their shop fronts are sympathetic with the district centre's heritage features.
- Need more information regarding the proposed final appearance of both the building and the signage.

**Withington Civic Society** objected to the proposal; the comments are summarised as follows

- The proposed signage is illuminated, massive and it would be positioned way above what would have been fascia height. It would be particularly intrusive within the street-scene. There is no precedent for such signage within the Conservation Area.

**MCC Highways Services** made no objection to the proposal, indicating that the proposed signage would have no detrimental impact on the highways or highway users.

**MCC Environmental Health Services** made no objection to the proposal, requesting a condition relating to the control of external lighting.

## Policies

The following policies are considered relevant in the consideration of this application.

**Local Development Framework**

The principal document within the framework is the Manchester Core Strategy which sets out the spatial vision for the City and includes strategic policies for development during the period 2012 – 2027.

'The Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012 -2027 ("the Core Strategy") was adopted by the City Council on 11th July 2012. It is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy replaces significant elements of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as the document that sets out the long term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development.

A number of UDP policies have also been saved until replaced by further development plan documents to accompany the Core Strategy. Planning applications in Manchester must therefore be decided in accordance with the Core Strategy, saved UDP policies and other Local Development Documents.

The following policies within the **Manchester Core Strategy** are considered relevant:

***Core Strategy policies***

**Policy SP1 (Spatial Principles)** - refers to the key spatial principles which will guide the strategic development of Manchester together with core development principles. It is stated that developments in all parts of the city should create well designed places which enhance or create character, make a positive contribution to the health, safety and well-being of residents, consider the needs of all members of the community and protect and enhance the built environment. Further, development should seek to minimise emissions, ensure the efficient use of natural resources, reuse previously developed land wherever possible, improve access to jobs, services and open space and provide good access to sustainable transport provision.

**Policy DM1 (Development Management)** states that new development should have regard to more specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given within supplementary planning documents. Issues include: the appropriate siting and appearance of development, the impact upon the surrounding area, the effects on amenity, accessibility, community safety and crime prevention, health, the adequacy of internal accommodation and amenity space and refuse storage/collection.

**Policy EN1 (Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas)** - All development in Manchester will be expected to follow the seven principles of urban design (character, continuity & enclosure, quality of the public realm, ease of movement, legibility, adaptability, diversity) as identified in national planning guidance and have regard to the strategic character area in which the development is located. Opportunities for good design to enhance the overall image of the city should be fully realised, particularly on major radial and orbital road and rail routes.

**Policy EN3 (Heritage)** - Throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre. Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

***Saved UDP policies***

**Policy DC14 (Shopfronts and Related Signs) -** this policy applies to all retail premises and to other commercial premises which have similar physical characteristics e.g. betting shops, banks, building society offices, opticians premises etc and seeks to ensure that interventions have an acceptable impact upon the visual and residential amenity of their surrounding area.

**Policy DC15 (Advertisements, hoardings and posters)** - requires that applications for advertisements be considered only in the interests of amenity and public safety. In determining applications for free standing hoardings and wall mounted posters the Council will take account of a number of matters in assessing these interests: The main matters to be considered in the context of this application are:

- The general location of the proposed advertisements and the effect of visual amenity,
- The design of the structures, and the relationship with any premises on which they are located;

**Policy E3.3 (Environmental Improvement and Protection)** – refers to the Council looking to upgrade the appearance of the city's major radial routes.

**Places for Everyone Greater Manchester Joint Development Plan (March 2024)**

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan was published in March 2024 and has been produced by Greater Manchester Combined Authority to provide a long-term plan for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth for nine of Greater Manchester's districts.

The Plan and its policies form part of the development plan and are now a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Plan and its policies must therefore be given significant weight in the planning balance.

The Plan identifies the essential aspect of the efficient and effective use of land with the preference to be given to making as much use as possible of suitable previously developed brownfield land and vacant buildings when meeting development needs.

The following policies are consideration relevant for this application:

**Policy JP-P1 (Sustainable Places) -** seeks to raise the quality of all places in a way that is sustainable in the long-term, to enhance the wellbeing for residents, as well as making Greater Manchester more attractive to potential visitors and investors.

**Policy JP-P2 (Heritage)** – seeks to manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain, and enhance the historic environment and heritage assets and their settings.

**National Planning Policy Framework**

The central theme to the revised NPPF is to achieve sustainable development. The Government states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: an economic role, a social role and an environmental role.

**Section 4 (Decision Making)** provides guidance on the decision-making process and mirrors legislation in stating that planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

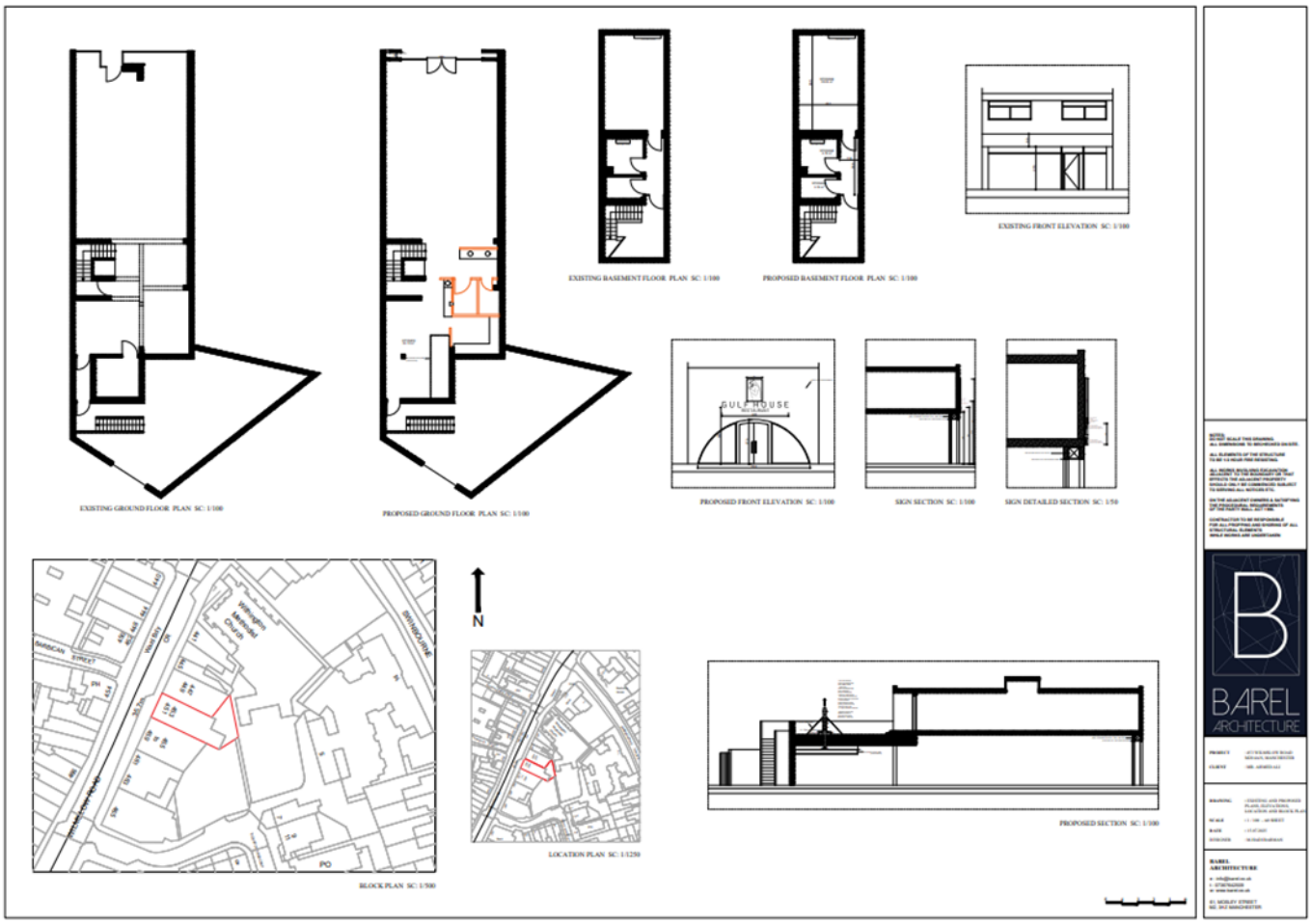
**Section 12 (Achieving Well Designed Places)** provides guidance on achieving well designed places to ensure new development functions well and adds to the overall quality of the area.

**Section 16 (Conserving and Enhanced the Historic Environment)** sets out the framework for protecting and valuing heritage assets, which include sites and buildings of historical

significance. The chapter requires local planning authorities to create strategies for conservation and to understand the significance of heritage assets and the potential harm development might cause. It outlines how to approach development that might impact heritage assets, focusing on avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating harm, and looking for opportunities to reveal or enhance their significance, while balancing this with public benefits.

**Paragraph 141** states that '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'.

**Planning Practice Guidance -** The Government produced a suite of documents to act as a live resource which set out advice and best practice on a wide range of planning issues following a detailed review of planning policy guidance as a way of streamlining policy.




**Submitted existing and proposed plans and elevations**

## Issues

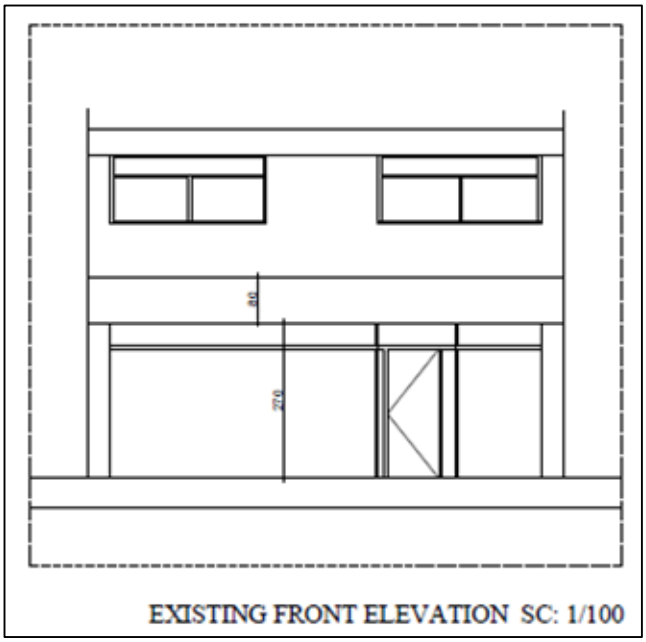
**Principle –** the principle of installing 1no. internally illuminated and 1no. externally illuminated sign on a shop frontage to advertise and denote the name of a business is generally acceptable where there is no overriding unduly harmful impact upon either the character and visual amenity of the area or public safety in and around the site.

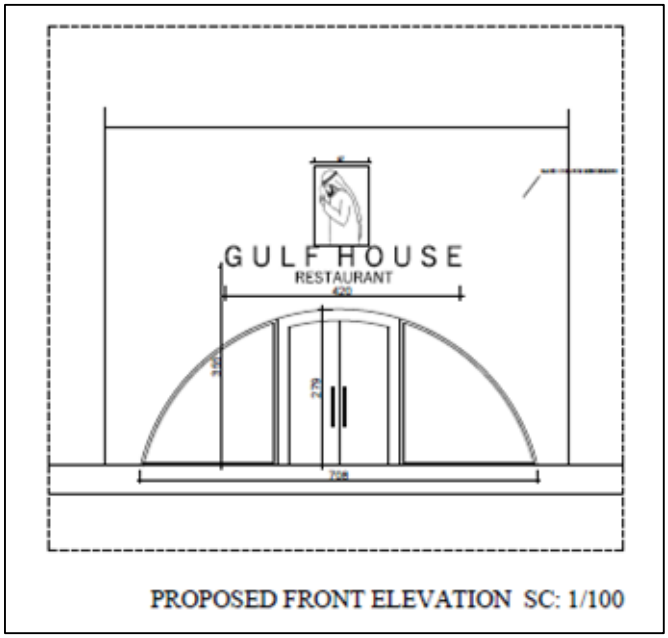
In this instance however, the principle of the proposal is considered unacceptable as it is believed that there are factors of sufficient weight in terms of visual amenity and harm caused to the character of the Withington Conservation Area that would warrant the refusal of this application.

On balance, the proposal is deemed to conflict with saved policies E3.3, DC15, and DC18 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, policies DM1, SP1, EN1, and EN3 of the Manchester Core Strategy, chapters 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework, MCC's Shopfront and Signage Design Guide, and policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of Places for Everyone.

**Visual amenity and impact upon the Withington Conservation Area –** the proposed signage would significantly undermine the visual amenity of the area and character of the Withington Conservation Area due to its scale, positioning and illumination which would introduce design elements that are discordant with the established character and signage typology extant along this section of Wilmslow Road, disrupting its architectural rhythm and introducing visual clutter to a historically coherent frontage.

The proposed signage, including its internally illuminated elements and silhouette figure, would dominate the front-facing façade of the building due their considerable scale (with the letter sign measuring to 0.66m in height, 4.2m in width, and 0.04m in depth and the silhouette sign measuring to 1.5m in height, 0.97m in width, and 0.05m in depth) and would fail to respect traditional shopfront design principles due to their siting above the first-floor cills with no clearly defined fascia line (as specified in MCC's Shopfront and Signage Design Guide). Further to this, their thicknesses (ranging from 40mm to 50mm) would also exceed the recommended maximum depth of 30mm (as specified in MCC's Shopfront and Signage Design Guide). The internally illuminated silhouette figure would be particularly incongruous as it would introduce a modern branding element that lacks contextual reference to the surrounding shopfronts. The combination of externally and internally illuminated signage (300cd/m2), mounted directly onto a blank sand-coloured rendered surface would result in a visually dominant/prominent and uncharacteristic intervention that would detract from the simplicity and restraint typical of signage within the Conservation Area, as well as the historic street scene and surrounding area, and would ultimately set an undesirable precedent for high level signage.

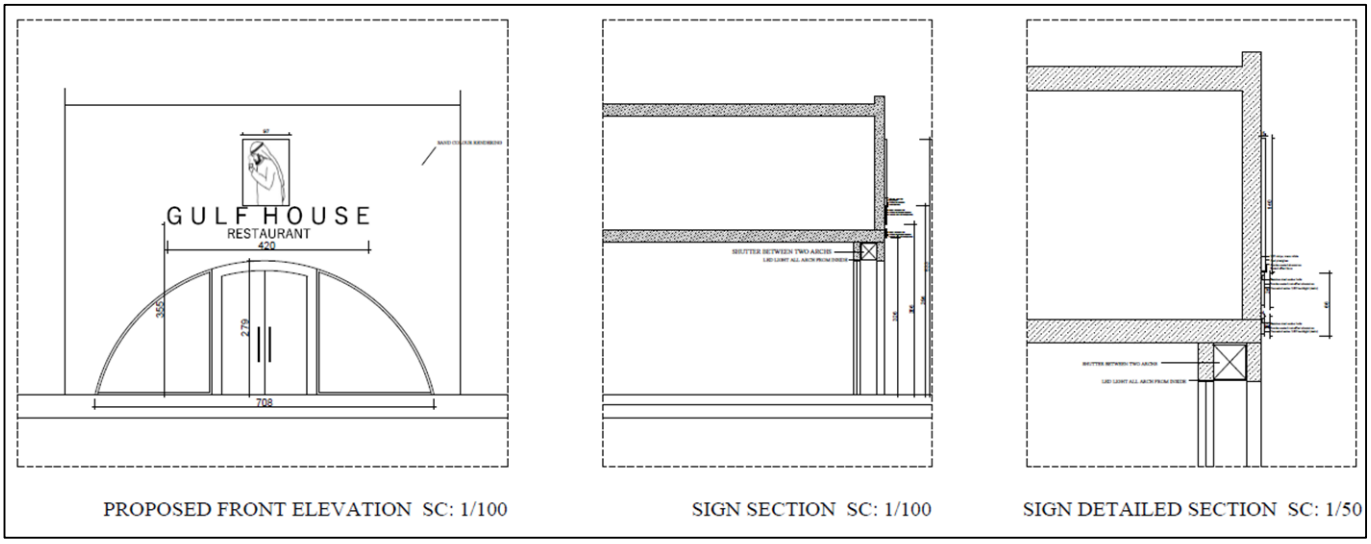



**Submitted existing and proposed front elevation**




**Site photograph of principal elevation of No.453 Wilmslow Road**




**Submitted proposed front elevation and sign section details**

For these reasons, the proposal is considered to conflict with the Conservation Area Regeneration Plan for Withington which seeks to improve shopfronts and their associated signage and reinforce a sense of uniformity as well as the guidance set out in MCC's Shopfront and Signage Design Guide, which seeks to preserve the architectural integrity and visual coherence of historic commercial frontages and advises that signage should be confined to the fascia and proportionate and respectful of the host building's architecture, with internally illuminated elements strongly discouraged, particularly in Conservation Areas.

It should also be noted that the degree of harm caused to the visual amenity of the area would be further exacerbated by the proposal's prominent siting adjacent to Wilmslow Road, along a key arterial route which seeks to upgrade the appearance of the city's major radial routes. The proposal would therefore directly conflict with saved policy E3.3 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester which seeks to upgrade the appearance of the city's major radial routes, as well as saved policies DC14, DC15, and DC18 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, policies DM1, SP1, EN1, and EN3 of the Manchester Core Strategy, chapters 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework, MCC's Shopfront and Signage Design Guide, and policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of Places for Everyone.

**Public safety –** the proposed signage would be sited a reasonable distance away from the public highway and footpath. It would have static illuminance levels of 300cd/m2, which accords with Highways' guidance. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would not harm public safety in and around the site.

**Conclusion -** the proposed signage, by virtue of its position above fascia level, lack of fascia delineation, and incongruous illuminated design, would result in harm to the visual amenity of the area and fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Withington Conservation Area. The signage is not sympathetic to the surrounding shopfronts and conflicts with local design guidance and national policy.

The proposal is deemed to conflict with saved policies E3.3, DC14, DC15, and DC18 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, policies DM1, SP1, EN1, and EN3 of the Manchester Core Strategy, chapters 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework, MCC's Shopfront and Signage Design Guide, and policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of Places for Everyone.

The agent of the application was informed of the above issues and notified of the LPA's intent to refuse the proposal.

## 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: Refuse

### Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

1) The proposal, by reason of its internally illuminated components, inappropriate design elements, excessive scale and massing, positioning above fascia level, and siting adjacent to a key radial route within the Withington Conservation Area, would be out-of-keeping with surrounding shopfronts, would be harmful to the visual amenity of the area, and would detract from the designated heritage asset, causing unnecessary visual harm and detriment to the special architectural and historic interest of the Withington Conservation Area. As such, the proposal is contrary to saved policies E3.3, D14, DC15, and DC18 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, policies DM1, SP1, EN1, and EN3 of the Manchester Core Strategy, chapters 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework, MCC's Shopfront and Signage Design Guide, policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of Places for Everyone and the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

**Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified**

Highway Services
Environmental Health
Heritage & Urban Design
Withington Civic Society
Withington Village Regeneration Partnership

443A Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 4AN
445 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 4AN
455 - 459 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 9AN
450 - 452 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 3BW
448 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 3BW
443 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 4AN
456 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 3BG
Basement, 455 - 459 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 9AN
458 - 460 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 3BG
Flat 2, 458 - 460 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 3BG
Flat 1, 458 - 460 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 3BG
445A Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 4AN
ONE STOP STORES LIMITED, Ground Floor, 455 - 459 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 4AN
450A Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 3BW
Southside Tequila Joint, 447 - 449 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 4AN
Flat 2, 441 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 4AN
459A Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 4AN
449A Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 4AN
Flat 1, 441 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 4AN
441 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 4AN
Albert Inn, 454 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M20 3BG

**Appendix 2 – Planning constraints**

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Conservation Area - Withington Conservation Area 1983
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: SOUTH AREA