MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no.	143704/AO/2025
Date registered valid:	11 August 2025
Proposal:	Installation of 2 no double sided digital, outdoor display units to pedestrian areas
Address:	Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
Ward(s):	Clayton & Openshaw Ward
Applicant:	Property Manager, Smart Outdoor Limited
Agent (if any):	Mr Stuart Wellman, Ardent Land Limited
Case officer:	Carl Glennon Tel: 0161 234 4530 Email: carl.glennon@manchester.gov.uk
Recommendation:	Approve
Date of recommendation:	1 October 2025

Application details

Type of application: Advertisement Consent

Development type: Advertisements

Date of site visit: 8 September 2025

Standard consultations:
Printed: 21 August 2025 Expired: 12 September 2025

Neighbour notifications
Printed: 21 August 2025 Expired: 12 September 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: Not applicable

Conservation area: No

Tree Preservation Order: No

Description of area

The application is related to a pedestrian route that runs through buildings forming the Lime Square shopping centre linking car parking areas to the north and south of the site. The car parking areas are accessed an egressed via Turton Street (west) and Fairfield Road (east). The west side of the pedestrian route is defined by the side elevation of Morrisons' supermarket with shopfronts to a number of Class E units located to the east. The pedestrian route is 7.5 metres wide and incorporating non-illuminated totem signage, planters and external customer seating areas.



Fig.1 – Views of the proposed signage locations

Description of advertisement displays

The application has been amended to reduce the number of totem signs from three to two. The proposal relates to the installation of two totem signs at the respective northern and southern ends of the pedestrian route. The each of the signage totems consist of:

i. A display unit with dimensions of 2700 mm (high) x 1300 (wide) and 340 mm (deep).
ii. A digital display screen with dimensions of 1620 mm (high) x 928 mm (wide). Display screens would be positioned on both sides of the unit.
iii. The external elevations would consist of pressed metal and GRP
iv.. The signage would be positioned with narrow edge of each unit in a north to south orientation.
iv. The display would be internally and intermittently illuminated.

v. The display units would have proposed illumination of 600 cd/m2 from dusk to dawn and in inclement weather and up to 5000 cd/m2 at other times.

Site History

The site has extensive site history, particle relation to the development of the shopping centre. Reference has bene made to the following previously considered advertisement consent application.

i. 120041/AO/2018 - Approved - 03.07.2018
1 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
Retrospective advertisement consent for the retention of 4 No. internally illuminated fascia signs around existing retail store

ii. 105798/AO/2014/N2 - Approved - 17.07.2014
Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Openshaw, Manchester, M11 1DA
Erection of two non-illuminated car parking directional signs on Turton Street frontage

iii. 105872/AO/2014/N2 - Approved - 28.07.2014
Unit 18 Lime Square, Openshaw, Manchester, M11 1DA
Installation of 2No. illuminated fascia signs, 1No. projecting illuminated sign and window vinyl

iv. 094315/AO/2010/N2 - Approved - 15.11.2010
Morrisons Supermarket, 1221 Ashton Old Road, Higher Openshaw, Manchester, M11 1DAInstallation of 3 internally illuminated fascia signs.

v. 094122/AO/2010/N2 - Approved - 25.10.2010
1221 Ashton Old Road, Openshaw, Manchester, M11 1DA
Installation of internally illuminated building signage including clocks, and four freestanding flagpole signs

vi. 093343/AO/2010/N2 - Approved - 17.07.2010
Unit 10, Openshaw District Centre Development, Junction Of Fairfield Road/ Ashton Old Road, Bradford, Manchester, M11 1DB
Erection of an internally illuminated fascia signage .

Consultations & Notification Responses

Local residents and businesses – No comments received.

Highway Services – The following comments have been received:

i. Any requirements for construction arrangements affecting the highways should be agreed with the Council as local highways authority.
ii. A condition has been recommended relating to the operation of the proposed digital display, including levels of illumination.

Issues

Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 - States that:

(1) 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 advertisement display would accord with the above requirements subject to implementation in accordance with the attached conditions. The siting of the associated display units would not present concerns regarding public safety.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - This Framework came into effect on 27th March 2012 and was amended most recently in December 2024. It represents key up to date national policy and is an important material consideration in determining the current application. The document states that the 'purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The document clarifies that the 'objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' . The purpose of the planning system is to achieve sustainable development. The NPPF states that, to achieve this, the following three overarching objectives need to be pursued mutually:

i. The economic role should contribute to sustainable development by building a strong, responsive and competitive economy that ensures sufficient and appropriate development and supports growth.
ii. The social role is required to support communities by creating a high quality built environment with accessible local services to reflect the needs of the community.
iii. The environmental role should protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment.

The Framework re-iterates that planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory status of the development plan remains as the starting point for decision making. The following aspects of the Framework are relevant.

Section 12. Achieving well-designed places

States that 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities' (paragraph 131). Regarding advertisement signage section 12 states: 'the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed (paragraph 141).It notes that 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' (paragraph 141).

The siting and orientation of the hub structure would secure an appropriate relationship to the surrounding public space and would not unduly impact upon pedestrian movement. The objectives of section 12 would be accorded with.

Planning Practice Guidance - On 6 March 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) launched this planning practice guidance web-based resource. The PPG seeks to both simplify and clarify planning guidance easier and simpler. It is intended to be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and is relevant to key planning issues of significance to applicants and local authorities. In considering this application consideration has been given to the following aspects of the PPG:

Advertisements - This section specifically refers to, amongst other things:

i. Considerations affecting public safety;
ii. Considerations affecting amenity;
iii. Advertisements.

In this case, it is considered that the display of signage would not be detrimental to highway safety, including the operation of nearby car parking areas. The signage would be appropriately related to a context characterised by retail and commercial uses. The proposal would be appropriately related to the relevant PPG.

Places for Everyone (PfE) - Is a long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth and took effect and became part of the statutory development plan on 21 March 2024.The plan and its policies are now a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Plan specifically:

i. Sets out how the nine boroughs should develop up until 2039;
ii. Identifies the amount of new development that will come forward across the nine districts, in terms of housing, offices, and industry and warehousing, and the main areas in which this will be focused;
iii. Supports the delivery of key infrastructure, such as transport and utilities;
iv. Protects the important environmental assets across the city region allocates sites for employment and housing outside of the existing urban area;
v. Defines a new Green Belt boundary for Greater Manchester.

The following policies are relevant and would not be accorded with for the reasons outline in this report:

i. Policy JP-P6 (Health)
ii. Policy JP-S1 (Sustainable development).

Manchester's Local Development Framework: Core Strategy - The Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012 -2027 (`the Core Strategy') was adopted by the 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 been saved until replaced by further development plan documents to accompany the Core Strategy. Planning [and advertising] applications in Manchester must be decided in accordance with the Core Strategy, saved UDP policies and other Local Development Documents.' The following policies are relevant to the proposed development:

Policy SP 1 (Spatial Principles) - Specifies the Core Development Principles for parts of the City. In this case the following relevant principles relate to the proposal:

- Makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including the creation of well-designed places that enhance or create character; making a positive contribution to the health, safety and well-being of residents, considering the needs of all members of the community regardless of age, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity or income and to protect and enhance the built and natural environment.

The appearance and prominent of the proposed signage units and illuminated displays would not be harmful to the character of the streetscene and public space. The amenities of the area would not be unduly affected by the siting of the advertisement and supporting structures. Policy SP1 would thereby be accorded with.

Policy EN 1 Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas – The displayed signage forms part of a suitably proportioned unit that would be appropriately within a retail and commercial setting. The proposals would therefore be appropriately related to policy EN1.

Policy DM1 (Development Management) - States that all development should have regard to the following specific issues:

a. Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail;
b. Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance with regard to the character of the surrounding area;
c. Effects on amenity;
d. Design for health.

As stated, the siting and appearance of the deeply unit and signage would be appropriately related to the setting of the application site. The proposals would not raise concerns regarding harm to amenity and well-being. Policy DM1 would thereby be accorded with.

Unitary Development Plan saved policies - The following saved policy DC15 has been related to the consideration of the advertisement consent application as it would be displayed within a free standing structure.

Policy DC15 - Advertisements, hoarding and posters

Policy DC15.1 – States that the advertisement regulations require 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 the following matters in assessing these interests, in relation to this application:

- General location of the proposed development and the effect on visual amenity;
- Scope for posters and hoardings to make a positive contribution to the locality;
- Design of the structures, and the relationship with any premises on which they are located;
- Effect of the proposal on permanent redevelopment of the land;
- Public safety resulting from the positioning of the design of the display;
- Ease with which the structure is capable of being satisfactorily maintained;
- Number of advertisements in the locality and their cumulative effect on visual amenity.

Policy DC15.2 – States that in assessing the interests of amenity and safety the Council will take account of the following criteria:

a. Developments of this kind should not harm the character or architectural features of a building, nor interfere with its proper use;
b. They should be in scale with the locality and relate properly to the site on which they stand;
c. They should be unobtrusive and should not intrude into residential neighbourhoods and areas of high amenity value;
d. A proposal which would be injurious to public safety or adversely affect the flow of traffic, by reason of its position, size, or design will not be permitted.

The displayed signage does not present apparent public or highways safety issues and its siting within the footpath would not be unduly prominent or obtrusive. Policies DC15.1 and DC15.2 would, therefore, be accorded with.

Principle of the displayed signage – Existing totem signage is located at each end of the pedestrian route, thereby setting a precedent for the display of freestanding signage with some height and a comparable orientation. Whilst the characteristics of the signage structure and advertisement display would depart from the existing circumstances, it is considered that the proposal would be suitably related to the surrounding context.

Illumination – The applicant has indicated maximum illumination of 600 cd/m2 for dusk to dawn periods. This would be acceptable and is conditioned. The applicant has indicated maximum daytime illumination of 5000 cd/m2, which would be potentially excessive in the context of the surrounding shopping centre, i.e., to avoid the overly prominent display of signage. A condition has been included that requires more appropriate illumination of 2500 cd/m2 during daylight hours.

Impact on the street scene – The impact of the proposed signage display would be predominantly restricted to the immediate context of the pedestrian route running through the shopping area. The impact on the wider site, including car parking areas would be limited and the advertisement displays are unlikely to distract drivers. It is considered that the retention of space between the proposed advertisement units and other street furniture would avoid the formation of undue clutter in the street scene. The proposal would not unduly harm the character and appearance of the street scene.

Conclusion – The proposed signage display and related units would be acceptable, in terms of siting, appearance and relationship to the surrounding context.

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

Article 35 Declaration

N/A

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 display of advertisement signage hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the details of the following drawings received by the City Council as local planning authority on 29 September 2025 and referenced:

Location plan – Proposed Ref: T4908 A4 050 Rev A
Site plan – Proposed Ref: T4908 A4 051 Rev A
Specifications – Proposed elevations Digital D6 Display – Double sided – Displays Ref: T4908 A4 066 Rev A.

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 for the City of Manchester.

3) a) The intensity of the illuminance of the advertisement shall be no greater than 600Cdm2 during hours of darkness and inclement weather and 2500 cd/m2 during daylight hours to accord with the recommendations of the ILP publication 'PLG05 The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements' (2015);

b) The luminance level of the digital sign shall be controlled by a light sensor to adjust the screen brightness to reflect the ambient levels during the daytime and set to a maximum brightness of 600 cd/m2 during hours of darkness to accord with the recommendations of the ILP publication 'PLG05 The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements' (2015). In the event of breakdown or malfunction the screen will automatically switch to a blank screen with black background;
c) The advertisement shall display no special visual effects of any kind during the time that the advertisement is displayed or on transition between advertisements. The displayed image shall not include animated, flashing, scrolling, intermittent or video elements and the transition between successive images shall not include fading, swiping or other animated transition method;
d) The minimum display time for each piece of content on the digital display screens shall be 10 seconds;
e) The interval between each piece of content on the digital display screens shall take place over a period no greater than one second; the complete screen shall change with no visual effects (including swiping or other animated transition methods) between displays;
f) Controls shall be in place to ensure smooth uninterrupted transition of images displayed on the panel;
g) Should a fault be detected or reported with the screen or advertisement, the screen will be programmed to automatically switch to a blank screen with black background.

Reason - In the interests of the amenities of the occupiers of nearby premises pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy for the City of Manchester, Unitary Development Plan saved policy DC15 and policy JP-P6 of Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services
Environmental Health

7 Turton Street, Manchester, M11 1FH
Specsavers, 17 - 18 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
Morrisons, 1 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
21 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DY
19 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DY
5 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
35 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
29 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
51 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
Unit 1, Buckley Street, Manchester, M11 1FA
The Gym, 22 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
Farmfoods, 20 - 21 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
Lemon Nails, 16 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
Greggs, 7 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
Extra Care Charitable Trust, 8 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
11 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
1 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DY
11 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
25 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
21 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
1 Turton Street, Manchester, M11 1FH
15 Turton Street, Manchester, M11 1FH

9 Turton Street, Manchester, M11 1FH
Costa Coffee, 19 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
Cardfactory, 6 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
29 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DX
25 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DX
9 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DY
7 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DY
41 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
39 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
11 Turton Street, Manchester, M11 1FH
All Mobility, 10 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
Poundland, 3 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
3 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DY
5 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DY
45 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
37 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
17 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
15 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
3 Turton Street, Manchester, M11 1FH
12 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
B&M, 2 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
97 Old Lane, Manchester, M11 1DE
33 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DX
9 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
41 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DX
37 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DX
35 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DX
27 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
Wynsors Shoes, 5 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
Betfred, 9 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
4A Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
99 Old Lane, Manchester, M11 1DE
31 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DX
13 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DY
7 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
49 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
47 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
23 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
13 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
13 Turton Street, Manchester, M11 1FH
Lime Square Medical Centre, 5A Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
14 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
17 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DY
11 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DY
19 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
5 Turton Street, Manchester, M11 1FH
1 Brock Close, Manchester, M11 1ED
15 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
McDonald's, Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
Store 21, 4 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
13 Lime Square, Ashton Old Road, Manchester, M11 1DA
93 Old Lane, Manchester, M11 1DE
95 Old Lane, Manchester, M11 1DE
27 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DX

23 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DX
15 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DY
43 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
33 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF
39 Rock Street, Manchester, M11 1DX
31 Edison Street, Manchester, M11 1QF

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

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
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: NORTH AREA