MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no.	143159/AO/2025
Date registered valid:	10 June 2025
Proposal:	Installation of internally illuminated fascia sign, non-illuminated projecting sign and wall mounted signs.
Address:	Co-op, 135 - 141 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8EE
Ward(s):	Whalley Range Ward
Applicant:	Mr Scott Martin, Pearce Signs Limited
Agent (if any):	Mr Scott Martin, Pearce Signs Limited
Case officer:	Janet Lawless Tel: 0161 234 4535 Email: janet.lawless@manchester.gov.uk
Recommendation:	Approve
Date of recommendation:	28 August 2025

Application details

Type of application: Advertisement Consent

Development type: Advertisements

Date of site visit: 11th July 2025

Standard consultations:
Printed: 16 June 2025 Expired: 7 July 2025

Neighbour notifications
Printed: 16 June 2025 Expired: 7 July 2025

Site notice
Posted: 11 July 2025 Expired: 1 August 2025

Press advert
Published: 24 June 2025 Expired: 15 July 2025

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building
The property is a food store lying to the south of Whalley Range Local Centre within Whalley Range Conservation Area. The shop is a single storey brick-built building fronting onto Withington Road with the car park and service yard to the rear. The car park is accessed via Mayfield Road to the south and the service yard via the gated access on Withington Road to the north. There are staff parking spaces in the service area in addition to parking spaces in the main parking area for customers.

Listed building: Not applicable

Conservation area: Whalley Range Conservation Area 1992

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

Description of area
Whilst there a commercial premises to the north and east, there are residential dwellings to the south and east.
The existing site is separated from the pavement on Withington Road and Mayfield Road by a narrow open paved forecourt area. There are two planters and a bench on the footway, together with a street tree facing Withington Road. There is an existing trolley bay area on the forecourt alongside the Mayfield Road frontage, together with cycle storage facilities. Mid grey bollards are in place alongside both street frontages of the existing building. The building has been occupied for some time by the COOP, however, has recently received planning consent through the planning appeal process for the subdivision of the unit. The COOP will now occupy approximately 50% of the building.

Description of development. The proposal is for the erection of one internally illuminated fascia sign, one projecting sign directional signs and frames for wall mounted signs. The colouration for the COOP has previously been a green background with white lettering this rebranding will comprise of grey background with blue lettering. The signs are relative replacements for the signs currently on the property. The signage will be as follows

Fascia Sign-Height 0.75 metres by Width 5.4 metres by Depth 0.5 metres the height from the ground to the base of the advertisement would be 2.6 metres. It would project from the building a maximum of 0.5m and the individual letters would have a maximum height of 25cm. The materials to be used would be Aluminium Sign Acrylic Letters Aluminium and Acrylic Logo The colour of text and background Grey Fascia Sign White Acrylic Letters - non illuminated Grey Logo Letters with Blue Acrylic Faces - static internally illuminated the maximum Illuminance levels 300 cd/m2 There will be two other fascia panels, however these will not contain advertisements nor any method of illumination and will just give a cohesive appearance of the uplift of the scheme.

Projecting or Hanging Sign Height 0.5 metres by Width 0.65 metres by Depth 0.6 metres the height from the ground to the base of the advertisement is 2.6 metres with the maximum projection of the advertisement from the face of the building being 0.8 metres. The maximum height of the individual letters and symbols would be 30 centimetres and the material to be used would be steel bracket and mounting plate with Foamex letters. The colour of the text and background would be grey metalwork with blue Foamex letters and the sign will be non-illuminated.

Wall mounted signage Height 0.6 metres by Width 0.6 metres by Depth 0.01 metres the height from the ground to the base of the advertisement is 1 metre the maximum projection of the advertisement from the face of the building is 0.01 metres and the maximum height of any of the individual letters and symbols is 1 centimetre.
The advertisement will be constructed of aluminium panels with the text and background blue with white text. They will be non- illuminated as wall mounted signage.

Consultations & Notification Responses
Local residents were informed- no representations have been received.

Highways-were consulted and have no objections to the proposal the illuminated signage is within the luminance levels being only 300cd/m2 and there is sufficient headroom clearance. The projecting sign has sufficient headroom above ground level and is non- illuminated and the wall mounted signs are non- illuminated and have sufficient headroom clearance with a maximum projection of 0.01m and as such are also acceptable.

Environmental Health- no objections

Whalley Range Forum / Conservation group were informed- no representations have been received.

Policies

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) – The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, i.e. the Core Strategy Development Plan Document and accompanying policies, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration in planning decisions.

Paragraph 11 states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which for decision-taking means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

Paragraph 12 states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.

In addition to the above, Section 16 (*Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)* is of relevance:

Paragraph 210 in Section 16 states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 212 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 214 states that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and

d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

Paragraph 215 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

The Places for Everyone Plan – This plan was adopted on 21 March 2024, as such the Plan and its policies 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 relevant policy is set out below:

Policy JP-Strat9, *Southern Areas* – This policy states that the economic competitiveness, distinctive local neighbourhood character and environmental attractiveness of the southern areas will be protected and enhanced. There will be a strong emphasis on making as much use as possible of suitable previously developed (brownfield) land and promoting the roles of the areas' town centres and its other key assets.

Policy JP-P2: *Heritage* – This policy states that the member authorities will proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and enhance their respective historic environments, heritage assets and their settings.

Core Strategy Development Plan Document – 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 been saved until replaced by further development plan documents to accompany the Core Strategy. Planning applications in Manchester must be decided in accordance with the Core Strategy, saved UDP policies and other Local Development Documents. Relevant policies in the Core Strategy are detailed below:

Policy SP1, *Spatial Principles* – Development in all parts of the City should make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including creating well designed places that enhance or create character and protect and enhance the built and natural environment.

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.

New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains.

Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

Policy DM1, *Development Management* – This policy states that all development should have regard to the following specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given within a supplementary planning document:

- Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.

- Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.
- Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.
- Accessibility: buildings and neighbourhoods fully accessible to disabled people, access to new development by sustainable transport modes.
- Community safety and crime prevention.
- Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage.
- Flood risk and drainage.

Saved UDP Policies – Policy DC14, Shop Fronts 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. it states that the Council will seek to ensure that proposals are in keeping with the character of the building and adjoining buildings, of adjoining shopfronts, where appropriate, and of the area within which the premises are located.

Policy DC18, *Conservation Areas* – Policy DC18.1 states that the Council will give particularly careful consideration to development proposals within Conservation Areas by taking into consideration the following:

a) The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the character of its designated conservation areas by carefully considering the following issues:

   i. the relationship of new structures to neighbouring buildings and spaces;
   ii. the effect of major changes to the appearance of existing buildings;
   iii. the desirability of retaining existing features, such as boundary walls, gardens, trees, (including
   iv. street trees);
   v. the effect of signs and advertisements;
   vi. any further guidance on specific areas which has been approved by the Council.

b) The Council will not normally grant outline planning permission for development within Conservation Areas.
c) Consent to demolish a building in a conservation area will be granted only where it can be shown that it is wholly beyond repair, incapable of reasonably beneficial use, or where its removal or replacement would benefit the appearance of character of the area.
d) Where demolition is to be followed by redevelopment, demolition will be permitted only where there are approved detailed plans for that redevelopment and where the Council has been furnished with evidence that the development will be undertaken.
e) Development proposals adjacent to Conservation Areas will be granted only where it can be shown that they will not harm the appearance or character of the area. This will include the protection of views into and out of Conservation Areas.

Issues

Principle - the principle of installing 1 no. internally illuminated fascia sign and 1 no. non-illuminated projecting box sign together with other non- illuminated signage in association with the advertising of a business that already occupies the premises is acceptable, however consideration must be given to the proposal's impact upon existing levels of visual amenity and public safety.

Visual amenity - the proposal includes the installation of 1no. internally illuminated fascia signs and 1no. non-illuminated hanging projecting sign together with non- illuminated directional or information signage within such areas as the car park to the rear and the service yard. The proposed signage is in association with the rebranding of the business operating from the property. They are considered to complement the building and are comparable to other styles of signage within the area. They are not therefore considered to be alien or have a detrimental impact upon the visual amenity of the building itself, nor upon the character of the Whalley Range Conservation Area within which it is located. The signage is also divided across the four elevations, and as such given this dispersal does not appear cluttered.

Impact upon the Whalley Range Conservation Area. The signage replaces that which occupied the full building when the CO-OP had the whole of the floorspace. Following the subdivision, the proposal is to form part of the facelift and re-branding of the part of the unit occupied by the CO-OP going forward. The new colourway is more subtle that the previous signage, and the amount of illumination is modest, and the same amount as previously attached to the building. As such the scheme is deemed to be sympathetic to its location and is considered acceptable within the context of its siting within the Whalley Range Conservation Area.

Considering the characteristics of the signage, combined with its clear relevance to the proposed business that would operate from the property, and the existing commercial precedent of this type of advertisement within the vicinity of the proposal site and wider area, the proposal is not considered to harm the visual amenity of the area or the conservation area within which it is located as the signage is relatively standard in terms of its design and scale on a unit of this type.

Whalley Range Conservation Area is defined by large houses on tree lined avenues, some of which have been converted to apartments or institutional uses over time. Large apartment buildings were built around the area prior to the designation of the conservation area. There are also a number of sites throughout the conservation area with larger buildings such at St. Bede's College and the British Muslim Heritage Centre.

In terms of this proposal, the proposed signs and their limited illumination are considered modest and would not detract from the appearance of the character of the Whalley Range Conservation Area as a whole.

Paragraph 208 states that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Given the design, scale and siting of the replacement signage, it is considered that any harm to the overall character of the Whalley Range Conservation Area would be at the very low end of less than substantial. In addition, when weighed against the public benefit of providing local services for the local community, what little impact there would be upon the character of the conservation area is considered acceptable in this instance.

The proposed signage is therefore considered to be of an acceptable design and would have minimal detrimental impact upon the street scene and visual amenity of the area, thereby according with policies DM1 and EN1 of the Core Strategy and policies DC14 and DC15 of the UDP and with Manchester City Councils shopfront design guide.

Materials- the materials to be used are considered appropriate and acceptable for signage of this use and in this location.

Public safety - the proposed signage would be sited on private space and does not overhang or project outwards onto a public highway. They would have static illuminance levels of 300cd/m², respectively which is within the maximum levels of 600cd/m². It is therefore considered that the proposal will not harm public safety at and around the site.

Conclusion - given the above issues, it is considered that the signage is acceptable in terms of its impact upon visual amenity and public safety in accordance with policies SP1, DM1, EN1 and EN3 of the Core Strategy, policies DC14, DC15 and DC18 of the UDP and chapters 7 and 12 of the NPPF and Manchester City Councils Shopfront Design Guide.

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 OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

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:
Site Plan R03
Proposed Elevations R03
EX01A VE Fascia R03 (static internal illumination)
EX01B Solid Fascia board strips (no advertisement)
EX01C Solid fascia board strips (no advertisement)
EX02 Internally Illuminated Letterset R03
EX03 Welcome Signage R03
EX04 Non- Illuminated Projecting Sign R03
EX05 Goods Delivery Sign R03
EX06 Parking Disclaimer Sign R03
EX07 Disabled Parking Sign R03
EX08 Disabled Disclaimer Sign R03
EX09 Banner Frame R03
EX11 Car Park Sign R03
EX13 Parent and Child Sign R03

All received 26th August 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 level of the advertisements hereby approved (EX01A VE Fascia R03 and EX02 Internally illuminated Letterset R03) shall not exceed 300cd/m² static respectively.

Reason - In the interests of pedestrian/highway safety and residential amenity enjoyed within the vicinity of the site, pursuant to policy DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services
Environmental Health
Whalley Range Forum/ Conservation Group

Flat 4, 50 Mayfield Road, Manchester, M16 8EU
133 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8EE
131B Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8EE
141 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8ED
Flat 8, 145 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FD

Flat 7, 145 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FD
First Floor, The Madina Hall, 122 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FB
134A Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FB
The Madina Hall, 122 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FB
131 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8EE
Flat 2, 41 Mayfield Road, Manchester, M16 8FU
Flat 1, 41 Mayfield Road, Manchester, M16 8FU
Flat 3, 41 Mayfield Road, Manchester, M16 8FU
Flat 3, 50 Mayfield Road, Manchester, M16 8EU
Flat 1, 50 Mayfield Road, Manchester, M16 8EU
Flat 1, 52 Mayfield Road, Manchester, M16 8EU
Flat 1, 54 Mayfield Road, Manchester, M16 8EU
Flat 1, 145 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FD
Flat 6, 145 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FD
Flat 4, 145 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FD
Whalley Range Dental Practice, 132 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FB
130 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FB
132A Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FB
Second Floor, The Madina Hall, 122 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FB
143 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8EE
Flat 2, 50 Mayfield Road, Manchester, M16 8EU
Flat 3, 52 Mayfield Road, Manchester, M16 8EU
Flat 2, 52 Mayfield Road, Manchester, M16 8EU
Flat 3, 54 Mayfield Road, Manchester, M16 8EU
Flat 2, 54 Mayfield Road, Manchester, M16 8EU
Flat 5, 145 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FD
Flat 2, 145 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FD
Flat 3, 145 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FD
136 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FB
128 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FB
126 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FB
134 Withington Road, Manchester, M16 8FB
43 Mayfield Road, Manchester, M16 8FU

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Conservation Area - Whalley Range Conservation Area 1992
Flood Zones Type 2 (low to medium risk) -
Flood Zones Type 3 (high risk) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: SOUTH AREA