

Manchester City Council
Town Hall
Albert Square
Manchester
M60 2LA

8th August 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990
DISPLAY AN ADVERTISEMENTS AT THE STABLES, BONDED WAREHOUSE, GRAPE STREET,
MANCHESTER**

On behalf of the applicant, All Studios Holdings Limited, we hereby submit an application seeking listed building consent for the display of an advertisement at The Stables, Bonded Warehouse, Grape Street, Manchester. This application should be read in conjunction with the advertisement consent, which has been submitted separately.

In addition to this letter, the application is supported by the following information:

- Completed Application Form;
- Location Plan
- Proposed Signage Drawing
- Photographs

THE SITE

The building subject to this advertisement consent application is located at The Stables, Bonded Warehouse, Grape House, Manchester. The site is adjacent to the Bonded Warehouse, off Lower Byrom Street in Manchester city centre. Nearby uses include the Science and Industry Museum; the emerging St John's neighbourhood and the commercial heart known as Enterprise City; a hotel; offices; and existing residential uses east of Lower Byrom Street.

The site itself comprises two former stables connected by a glazed link. The buildings were constructed between 1891 and 1908, and were associated with the adjacent Bonded Warehouse. They subsequently became part of the Granada Studios site, at which time the Rovers Return frontage was added and the glazed conservatory was installed.

The signage is in association with the planning applications which were consented in June 2024 for the

change of use, refurbishment and alteration of 'The Stables' to create a bar restaurant (Use Class sui generis) including replacement roof and removal of conservatory.

The Bonded Warehouse was listed at Grade II in July 2018. The stables are therefore curtilage listed. They date to before 1948. They are located within the curtilage by virtue of their proximity to the listed warehouse; their historical and present ownership; and their historical, functional link to the warehouse building.

The site is also located in the Castlefield Conservation Area. The significance of the Conservation Area relates to the presence of structures reflecting the industrial development of this part of Manchester, and the area's associations with the Roman period.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application seeks advertisement consent to display two signs. There will be no change of use, and the premises will continue to operate under its existing use, as consented under planning application refs 138279/FO/2023 and 138280/LO/2023. This application is for retrospective consent.

Please note, All Studios Holdings Limited require the signage to remain permanently as the signage is complementary to the site's use and functionality. As part of the separate advertisement consent, the applicant has requested that consent is granted for a minimum of five years, and for the advertisements to continue to be displayed under Class 14 deemed consent, for all year-round use.

SIGNAGE

For further details on the proposed signage please refer to the submitted drawing and photographs. A summary is provided below.

This application seeks advertisement consent to display the following:

- 1 X fascia sign which comprises of lettering attached to the building's front façade.
- 1 X timber hanging sign attached to the building's front façade.

Hanging Sign

One flat timber sign with 50mm timber architrave is positioned above the entrance/door panels (Grape Street elevation), measuring 700mm(w), 1,000mm(h) and 100mm(d). The sign is fixed onto the wall with a bracket and coach bolts. The height from the ground to the base of the advertisement is 3m and the illumination levels are up to 100cd/m² (externally illuminated). The lighting in place features a swan neck arm with angled domed head, in polished black. The fitting is IP43 rated. The lighting in place is located either side of the sign.

In terms of coloring, the sign has been painted dark green to match the existing green used on the adjacent

Bonded Warehouse. Graphic lettering has been applied directly onto the painted board. Please refer to Figure 1 which illustrates the sign for which retrospective consent is sought.

Figure 1: Photo of Hanging Sign (with Bonded Warehouse pictured to the rear)



Fascia Sign

One fascia sign is positioned above the window opening (Grape Street elevation), measuring 200mm(w) and 300mm(h). The sign is formed of individual letters that have been placed onto the steel supporting beam above the window opening, which has been painted black. The height from the ground to the base of the advertisement is 2.5m and the lettering / sign is non-illuminated.

In terms of coloring, the individual lettering is colored gold. Please refer to Figure 2 which illustrates the sign for which retrospective consent is sought.

Figure 2: Photo of Fascia Sign



Figure 3: Photo of Existing Fascia and Hanging Sign



IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT

The Stables

The setting of the Stables has been subject to extensive change over its lifetime, including the conversion of the site to television studios, and the ongoing alterations which were required to provide the necessary sets, and subsequently, a studio tour. The setting continues to evolve, with consent granted for comprehensive redevelopment of the wider site, and the recent applications refs 138279/FO/2023 and

138280/LO/2023 which were approved for modest internal and external modifications, to enable The Stables to open as a pub/restaurant.

Castlefield Conservation Area

Due to the tight urban grain around the site, and the size of the Conservation Area, the Stables form only a small part of it. They have a limited zone of visual influence in relation to the broader Conservation Area. The improvements to the Stables will have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area, which will be preserved in line with the requirement, and no harm caused. Significance will be upheld

In summary, the impact of the current proposal is sympathetic, modest and minimal, and enhances the Stables and their setting within the Conservation Area, in line with the legislative requirement, therefore, no harm will be caused. The significance of the asset will be upheld and the signage is integral to allow the premises to occupy and function efficiently.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This assessment is proportionate to the importance of the designated assets and sufficient to understand the impact of the proposal.

Special Architectural and Historic Interest

The Stables have modest evidential, historical and aesthetic value which derives from their relationship to the Bonded Warehouse. As such, they reflect to some degree the historical development of Manchester as a c19th industrial, railway city. However, unlike the warehouse, the Stables do not retain original features, which thereby reduces its significance. They may also be said to have a small amount of communal value due to their relationship to the former Coronation Street set.

Contribution of setting to significance

The proximity of the adjacent Bonded Warehouse is the principal contributor to the setting of the Stables, given the historic functional relationship between the two buildings. However, the surroundings of the warehouse and the Stables has been subject to extensive change due to the development of Granada Studios and the long-term use of the site for television recording purposes, which gave rise to much reworking of surrounding buildings and sets. More recently, consent was granted for the redevelopment of this location into the St John's neighbourhood including Enterprise City.

The Stables are viewed within this mixed context, which comprises modern development alongside heritage assets. The setting's contribution to the significance of the Stables is therefore partly positive, with the warehouse enhancing the asset's historic context and significance and partly negative.

Given the tight urban grain of this location, and the smaller scale of the Stables compared to the far larger buildings close by, the contribution of the Stables to the Conservation Area is modest.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

This letter has described the proposals and will now examine the planning considerations which they raise. In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, determination of the application must be made in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The proposed fascia signs have been considered in the context of the Control of Advertisement Regulations Act (2007; the "Act") and planning policy at national and local level, in particular the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), Birmingham Plan 2031 (2017).

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) articulates the priorities of the Plan for Growth within planning policy. At the heart of the NPPF is a 'presumption' in favour of sustainable developments, with support given to proposals that are in accordance with policies in an up-to-date Development Plan. Sustainable development is about positive growth – making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations.

The NPPF states at Paragraph 141 that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

In terms of amenity, the NPPG reiterates the wording of the Act and the NPPF, that amenity is understood to mean the effect on visual and aural amenity in the immediate neighbourhood of an advertisement. Therefore, in assessing amenity, a Local Planning Authority would always consider the local characteristics of the neighbourhood and whether the advertisement was in keeping with that setting.

In terms of public safety, the NPPG states that advertisements are less likely to create road safety problems if they are located away from roads, junctions, roundabouts, pedestrian crossings or other places where local conditions represent traffic hazards.

The signage has been designed to be of a suitable scale to its surroundings. The dimensions of the sign are reflective of the height of the host building, and the size of the sign is necessary to enable visibility from street level.

The NPPF states (paragraph 207) that when determining applications which impact heritage assets, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.

The NPPF goes on to state (paragraph 210) when determining 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.

Paragraphs 212 to 221 of the NPPF set out guidance for considering potential impacts and state that weight should be given to the asset's conservation and where there is a less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including securing its optimum use.

In accordance with the NPPF, the advertisement will facilitate the operation of a successful business in Manchester city centre, offering a unique hospitality experience that will contribute to the area's economic growth and vitality.

The advertisements are designed in a sensitive manner and will not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of surrounding occupiers, its heritage setting, nor pose any risk to public safety. Additionally, the surrounding area features a variety of advertisements, differing in size, scale, and colour. As such, the visual impact of the proposed signs on the surrounding area and the existing building will be minimal. It is therefore considered that the proposal aligns with the principles outlined for advertisements in the NPPF and NPPG.

Local Planning Policy and Guidance

The Core Strategy Development Plan document was adopted in July 2012 and sets out the spatial vision and strategy for the sustainable growth of Manchester for the period 2012 to 2027. The policies relevant to this application are as follows:

Policy EN3 – Heritage

This Policy encourages development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts, neighborhoods and city centre environments. This policy also promotes proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

As previously mentioned, the Site is located within the curtilage of the Grade II listed Bonded Warehouse, and as such is itself to be considered as part of the listed structure. It is located within the Castlefield Conservation Area. Additionally, the stables were constructed between 1891 and 1908. Around the same time, the stables were converted into replicas of the public houses featured in Coronation Street and Emmerdale, which involved external alterations. Internally, there is no historic fabric remaining.

Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (Adopted April 2007)

The above SPD promotes the well-being and high-quality design of streets, to promote neighborliness and to encourage buildings to have positive impact and enhance the quality of the environment. The SPD also seeks for the design of shop fronts, security measures, forecourts and signage to contribute to the character, identity, individuality and accessibility of local centres, recognising that these elements play a major role in creating the sense of place and image of the area.

The SPD also requires the design of shop fronts and signage to relate to and harmonise with the character of the area within which the building is located. Local centres must be accessible to ensure inclusiveness, and entrances to shops, services and facilities, and new or improved public realm works should be designed with this in mind.

POLICY SUMMARY

The proposed signage is modestly designed and is expected to enhance the visual appearance of the building and streetscape. It will also assist in wayfinding for prospective customers of the bar.

The signage has been carefully scaled to suit its surroundings, with dimensions that align with the height of the host building, ensuring adequate visibility from street level. The signage will have minimal visual impact on both the surrounding area and the existing structure, particularly when viewed in the context of the city centre, which is characterised by a variety of illuminated and non-illuminated signage in diverse colours and materials. This context sets a natural precedent for such applications.

Consequently, the proposal aligns with the principles set out in the NPPF, NPPG, and local policy regarding advertisements. The design is subtle and will not adversely affect the amenity of surrounding occupiers or pose any risk to public safety. Overall, the visual impact of the signage will be minimal, and helps to encourage an active street frontage, creating a vibrant and welcoming street environment atmosphere. The proposal is therefore in accordance with the guidelines established in the adopted policy.

The proposed signage has been designed to effectively identify and brand the premises. It is considered appropriate in terms of its extent, form, and materials, taking into account the overall scale and visual context of the host building, the Grade II listed Bonded Warehouse and its location within Castlefield Conservation Area.

CONCLUSION

This letter has been prepared on behalf of All Studios Holdings Limited to support a listed building consent application at The Stables, Bonded Warehouse, Grape Street, Manchester. The proposed signage is of high quality and is designed to enhance the visual appeal of the building and sympathise with the surrounding materiality and historic significance.

The proposed signage is considered appropriate in its size, scale, location and will respect the character and appearance of the existing building. The proposal is considered to represent a fair balance between the requirements for the occupier to advertise their business as well as maintain the visual amenity and historic significant of the locality.

We trust that the above information and attached plans are sufficient to allow validation and subsequent approval. If I can be of any further assistance, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Phoebe Threlfall'.

Phoebe Threlfall
Associate Planner