MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no.	142710/AOH/2025
Date registered valid:	14 April 2025
Proposal:	Two digital 75 inch LCD display screen, one on each side of the Street Hub unit.
Address:	Footpath Outside 1054 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PE
Ward(s):	Clayton & Openshaw Ward
Applicant:	Simon Warner, BT Group Plc
Agent (if any):	Mr Martin Brown, Telent
Case officer:	Carl Glennon Tel: 0161 234 4530 Email: carl.glennon@manchester.gov.uk
Recommendation:	Refuse
Date of recommendation:	6 June 2025

Application details

Type of application: Advertisement Hoardings Consent

Development type: Advertisements

Date of site visit: 30 May 2025

Standard consultations:
Printed: 20 May 2025 Expired: 31 May 2025

Neighbour notifications
Printed: 20 May 2025 Expired: 31 May 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

This planning application relates to section of pavement located on the southern side of Ashton New Road close to its junction with Howgill Street and approximately 10 metres from the eastern boundary with Tameside MBC. The adjacent street frontage comprises of back of pavement predominantly two storey retail and commercial units. Terraced housing is located to the south of these units. The northern side of Ashton New Road comprises a retail, commercial and terraced housing over two storeys. The surrounding area forms part of a local centre. The adjacent section of highway is protected by due yellow lines at the junction with Howgill Street but there are car parking bays adjacent to the site. This section of the highway is used by vehicles and Metrolink trams. Tram lines are incorporated into the surface of the highways and lighting columns incorporate cables that span Ashton New Road to facilitate the operation of trams).



Fig.1 – Views of the application site from Ashton New Road

Description of advertisements

The proposed advertisement involves:

i. The installation of a street hub with an upright rectangular configuration and dimensions of 2980 mm (high) x 1236 mm (wide) and 350 mm (deep). The hub unit would comprise of a black aluminium cabinet with HD screens with LED backlighting to the east and west elevations (displaying changing images, including advertisements. The hub would incorporate a wi-fi connection and an interactive tablet providing access to local information and services. A telephone would also be integrated into the side elevation of the hub.

ii. The advertising screens would have dimensions of 1.67 metres (high) x 0.95 metres (wide). Maximum illuminance would be 5000 cd/m2 falling to 600 cd/m2 at night reduced light. The illumination would be static with images changing every 10 seconds. The base of the signage would be 850 mm above ground level.

iii. The hubs are intended to replace existing telephone kiosks and applicant proposes to remove two existing telephone kiosks as part of the development (located at 1068 Ashton New Road and 540 Edge Lane).

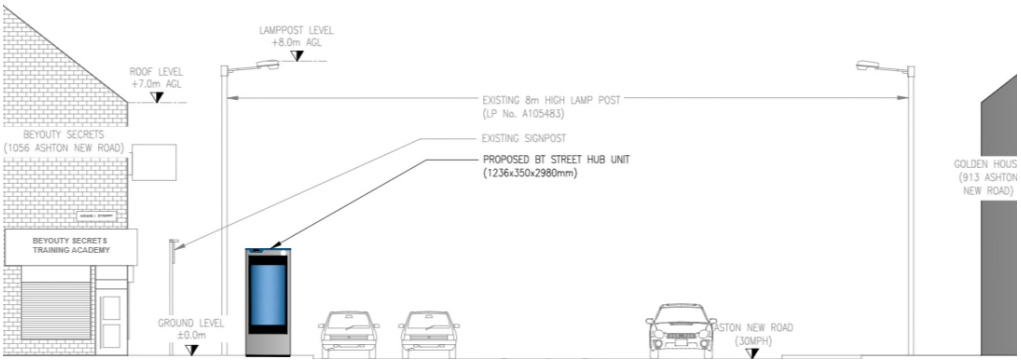


Fig.2 – Proposed hub in relation to the streetscene

Site history

The application site has no history of applications seeking planniing permission or advertisement consent. The installation of the proposed and related hub structure is considered under planning applicatioon referenced:

142709/FO/2025 - Installation of 1No. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit
Footpath Outside 1054 Ashton New Road Manchester M11 4PE

Consultations & Notification Responses

Local residents and businesses – No comments received.

Highway Services – The following comments have been received:

i. Highways have concern that the proposed hub structure may obstruct vehicular visibility at the Ashton New Road and Howgill Street junction. A visibility splay assessment is therefore requested for this junction.
ii. The proposed luminance of the totem sign is noted as 5000 cd/m2 and is to automatically reduce to 600cd/m2 during non-daylight hours. It is noted that the screens will display content at 10-second intervals.
Iii. Should advertisement consent be granted a condition is recommended to manage the display of advertisements.

Transport for Greater Manchester – In terms of the proposed luminance of the LED screens, the application forms submitted alongside each application confirm that the luminance will not exceed 600cd/m2 in the evening period. This should be checked against recommendations contained within the Institute of Lighting Professionals Lighting Guide Technical Report 5. Additionally, the LED screens should not feature any moving images.

Metrolink – The proposed unit has a general traffic lane between it and the operational tramway and is therefore considered to be sufficiently remote from the Metrolink tracks that we have no comments to make in respects of this application.

Greater Manchester Police Design for Security – No objection.
Cadent – No objection but request and informative (should planning permission be granted) advising of the need to safeguard gas infrastructure when implementing associated ground work.

This application is one of 40 applications that have been submitted. Manchester City Council Digital Strategy team have made comments in relation to the applications as follows:
As a user leaves the 150m range, they lose WiFi access. Success of public Wi-Fi delivered in this way depends on density and frequency of similar Wi-Fi devices on streets.
Smart Hubs are an addition to connectivity in the city, but do not meaningfully solve urban connectivity issues.
The Manchester Digital Strategy's focus is on the provision of small cell infrastructure on street lighting rather than through free Wi-Fi installations such as the proposal.

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.

Notwithstanding concerns expressed concerns regarding harm to the character and amenity of the street scene. The application it is considered that the illumination to the signage would accord with the relevant lighting standards and would thereby be appropriately related to the above regulations.

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 proposed hub structure would be visually obtrusive and poorly related to its context. The associated incorporated illuminated signage with changing images would exacerbate the prominence of the structure and its incongruous relationship to the street scene. The resulting harm to the character and amenities of the area would be contrary to the objectives of section 12.

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. However, the displayed signage is unduly prominent and harmful to visual amenity and therefore is inappropriately related the relevant PPG.

The Places for Everyone Plan - The Inspectors' Report on the examination of the Places for Everyone plan was published on 15 February 2024. The Inspectors' Report sets out and justifies their recommendations in relation to the plan, and they have concluded that all legal requirements have been met and that with the recommended main modifications set out in the appendix to their report, the Places for Everyone plan is 'sound'. The nine constituent local authorities will now consider the Inspectors' Report and the adoption of Places for Everyone. The first Council meetings to approve the plan will be Salford and Wigan (28 February). The plan was considered at the Full Council meeting in Manchester on 20 March 2024, and was subsequently approved on 21st March 2024. Given the stage the Plan has reached, the Plan and its policies is now a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Plan and its policies must therefore be given full weight in the planning balance. The following policies are relevant and would not be accorded with for the reasons outline in this report:

i. 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 displays would be harmful to the character of the street scene and amenities of the area and thereby be contrary to policy SP1.

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.

The position and illumination of the signage, within the context of the footpath and the adjacent highway, would have a visually intrusive and distracting impact on the street scene. The resulting harm to amenity and the character of the area would be contrary to the objectives of policy DM1.

Policy EN 1 Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas – The displayed signage forms part of a disproportionately large hub structure that would represent and incongruous feature in the street scene. The displayed signage would exacerbate the harm causes by the hub and the proposal thereby fails to accord with policy EN1.

Unitary Development Plan saved policies - The following saved policy DC15 has been related to the consideration of the advertisement consent application. Although the signage is related to retail use, it is not attached to the elevations of the shop unit. It also has the characteristics of an advertising hoarding.

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. However, its positioning within the footpath would be unduly prominent and harmful to the character of the street scene. Policies DC15.1 and DC15.2 would not, therefore, be accorded with. Issues surrounding highway safety have been raised in relation to the supporting structure. This is referred to in the accompanying application referenced 142709/FO/2025.

Principle of the displayed signage – The siting of the associated hub structure would be unacceptable due to its disproportionate scale and prominence within the street scene. The harm caused by the introduction of such a visual obtrusive and overly prominent feature to the street scene would be exacerbated by the inclusion of illuminated displays. The proposed display of signage within the setting of footpath would be harmful to the character and appearance of the street scene and the amenities of the area.

Impact on the street scene - The proposed signage would be related to a hub structure that would be disproportionately large within the context of neighbouring shopfronts. The proposed signage would be related to two elevations of the hub thereby presenting potentially distracting illuminated display of changing images that would be highly visible when approaching the site. The incorporation of a double sided display would also lead to an over proliferation of signage, which would result in visual clutter (when viewed in the context of neighbouring shop signage). Such circumstances would exacerbate harm to the character, appearance and amenities of the area.

Conclusion – The displayed signage is unacceptable due to the related harm caused to the visual harm it would cause to the character and amenities of the area.

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**

Article 35 Declaration

N/A

Reasons for recommendation to refuse

1) The proposed advertisements (incorporating changing images), by virtue of their position, size, appearance, means of illumination and method of display, would introduce visually intrusive features in the street scene. The resulting harm to the amenities of the area and the character of the street scene would be exacerbated the highly prominent display of illuminated images on two elevations of the related hub structure. The proposals would thereby further lead to an over proliferation of displayed signage and visual clutter. The resulting adverse impact on the amenities of the area and character of the street scene would be contrary to policies SP1, DM1 and EN1 of the Core Strategy for the City of Manchester, saved policy DC15.1 and DC15.2 of the Unitary Development Plan, policy JP-P1 of Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services
Greater Manchester Police
Transport For Greater Manchester

911 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PB
909 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PB
907 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PB
1044 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PE
Top Flat, 907 - 909 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PB
Top Flat, 911 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PB
Top Flat, 913 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PB
Top Flat, 1052 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PE
Top Flat, 1046 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PE
Flat, 1056 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PE
Top Flat, 1054 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PE
1054 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PE
1048 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PE
913 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PB
907 - 909 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PB
905 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PB
903 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PB

1056 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PE
1052 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PE
1050 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4PE
460 Droylsden Road, Manchester, M11 4PE

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
Historic Landfill Site 50m Buffer -
Area Team Boundary - Name: NORTH AREA