

PLANNING STATEMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Thomas Partnership are retained by Manchester Industrials Limited (the Applicant), freeholders of the property situated at the corner of Oldham Road and Cipher Street, Manchester M4 5HD (the Site) to submit an express consent planning application (the Application) to Manchester City Council being the local planning authority (LPA), for the conversion of an existing media asset comprising of 1 x 48 sheet backlight panel (the Existing Display) to a digital equivalent and the addition of a second similarly sized panel behind it (the Proposed Display).

2.0 THE SITE & LOCATION

The Site forms a broadly rectangular, level area of enclosed land fronting Oldham Road (A62) with a concreted area for servicing the Existing Display.

The southern boundary runs parallel to Oldham Road, to the west and north the Site is the car park of the Royal Mail Sorting Office and to the east, Cipher Street which provides limited vehicular access to the industrial units nearby. The location is exclusively commercial and industrial with no extant competing media assets.

The Site is not in, adjacent or particularly near to a conservation area nor are there any listed buildings within the immediate environment. The Ancoats Conservation Area lies to the South side of Oldham Road visually separated from the Site by four lanes of traffic and a central reservation. The focus of the conservation area is recognised as being somewhat distant from the Site.

It is not located within an Area of Special Control as defined by the Regulations.

3.0 DESIGN

The Existing Display comprises of a 1 x 48 sheet backlight panel and Proposed Display with a clear span of 2.5m from ground level.

The Proposed Display will mimic the Existing Display inasmuch that the westbound panel retains the exact position of the existing panel and is complimented by the addition of a westbound panel on the reverse.

The Proposed Display is simple and contemporary in design and will sit comfortably within the built environment in which it will be located.

See drawings 001-011 accompanying this application.

4.0 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The National Planning Policy Framework, as revised December 2023, provides clear planning practice guidance in relation to the design and determination of express consent applications which reflects the principles and application of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

Paragraph 141 of the NPPF states:

The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient, and effective.

Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

Public Safety

The Proposed Display has been located and designed so that it conforms to the guidance. The Proposed Display would be seen clearly at long-range and does not obscure or conflict with any road signage, traffic control infrastructure, filter lanes or road junctions. It should be noted that the Existing Display has not compromised public safety has not caused any issues with public safety.

It is an accepted principle that drivers and pedestrians are not absolved of their right of taking reasonable care and attention of their own safety and of others. The Proposed Display will be clearly visible but will be clearly legible and safe in its operation creating no risk to public safety, either vehicular or pedestrians.

Visual Amenity

The Proposed Display will add colour and interest in a relatively featureless area. It is not considered that the Display would be detrimental to the environment within which it sits which is exclusively commercial and industrial and dominated by the Royal Mail Sorting Office.

5.0 PLANNING HISTORY

The Existing Display was granted consent by appeal in January 2012.

Appeal Reference: APP/B4215/H/11/2154556.

Neither the LPA nor the Inspector raised any issue related to public safety. In 2012 the Department for Transport Count Point 56492 recoded traffic flow was 19,635 (estimated) vehicles per day, in 2022 it had reduced to 13,772 (estimated).

In terms of visual amenity, the Inspector found that the Existing Display would not be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area generally and specifically not to the Ancoats Conservation Area.

6.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

Times change and so does the environment, public awareness, and the acceptability of what becomes expected to be seen within it. What was once considered unusual, or pioneering can become normalised and every day. That is why considering each application on its own merits has become the overriding principle when considering planning applications for express consent to display advertisements.

Great care has been taken to produce a contemporary and attractive display which will maintain a beneficial use of the Site to the Applicant and will sit comfortably and safely within both its immediate, and the wider environment.

Conclusion

Following the clear guidance of Paragraph 141 of the NPPF it is respectfully suggested that the Application is neither detrimental to public safety, nor visual amenity, and the Proposed Display should be granted express consent subject to the following conditions.

Special Conditions

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In addition to the Standard Conditions set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulations this application proposes certain Special Conditions be applied to the express consent. They are:

- A The maximum level of illumination to be no more than 300 cd/m² above ambient light levels at any time and in the hours of darkness does not exceed 30 cd/m² This is in accordance with best practice advice from both Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP).
- B Any advertisement displayed should not include any element of animation and each piece of 'copy' will be delivered without fading or gradual transition.
- C The screen will not be illuminated during the hours of 00:00-06:00
- D In the event that a screen is defective for any reason that screen must be programmed to go dark.

Standard Conditions

As set out in Schedule 2 to the Regulations. These are:

- no advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site on which they are displayed (this includes the highway authority, if the sign is to be placed on highway land);
- no advertisement is to be displayed which would obscure, or hinder the interpretation of, office
- al road, rail, waterway, or aircraft signs, or otherwise make hazardous the use of these types of transport;
- any advertisement must be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site;
- any advertisement hoarding or structure is to be kept in a condition which does not endanger the public; and
- if an advertisement is required to be removed, the site must be left in a condition that does not endanger the public or impair visual amenity.

Mr T D J Thomas, MRICS

13 March 2024