

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 138503/AO/2023

Date registered valid: 28 November 2023

Proposal: Installation of 5no internally illuminated fascia signs and 1no non-illuminated totem sign.

Address: Staycity Manchester, 8B Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH

Ward(s): Piccadilly Ward

Applicant: Staycity Group Staycity Group

Agent (if any): Anthony Gray Astley Signs

Case officer: Max Gibson
Tel: 0161 219 6359
Email: maximillian.gibson@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approved and Refused

Date of recommendation: 22 January 2024

Application details

Type of application: Advertisement Consent

Development type: Advertisements

Date of site visit:

Standard consultations:

Printed: 29 November 2023

Expired: 20 December 2023

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 29 November 2023

Expired: 20 December 2023

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

The site relates to Gateway House, an iconic modernist office block designed by Richard Seifert & Partner's, which was completed in 1969. It is nicknamed the 'lazy s' owing to its curved, undulating facade which leads up to the Manchester Piccadilly Station concourse. The building's aesthetic is characterised by long, sweeping lines and is highly glazed. It has undergone significant renovation, completed in 2017, and now comprises ground floor commercial units with a hotel to the upper floors. The site does not fall within a conservation area.

Listed building: Not applicable

Conservation area:

Tree Preservation Order:

Description of area

The area relates to Manchester Piccadilly, the main national transport hub in Manchester. The area comprises many different uses, including transport, drinking, dining, office, hotel and residential.

Description of development

The development relates to the installation of 2no. internally illuminated fascia signs, 1no. high level internally illuminated signs and 1no. non-illuminated totem sign.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Publicity - letters were sent to surrounding occupiers notifying them of the development. No representations have been received as a result of this publicity.

HS2 - no objection, informative requested and attached to this decision.

Environmental Health - no objection, condition requested controlling light/glare. An appropriate condition is attached to this decision.

MCC Highways - no objections, informative is attached to this decision regarding highways licences related to construction.

Issues

The main issues for consideration relate to the acceptability of the proposal in terms of its impact upon visual amenity, impact upon the adjacent Conservation Area and Public Safety. The main policies that relate to the assessment of the proposal are the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 and Core Strategy policies DM1 (Development Management), SP1 (Spatial Principles), the Saved Policies contained within the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester in particular DC14 (Shop fronts and Related Signs), DC15 (Advertisements, Hoardings and Posters and the National Planning Policy Framework, in particular Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) and Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment).

Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007

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

Issues

The Advertisement Regulations require that applications for shop signs be considered only in the interests of amenity and public safety. An assessment of the proposals under these criteria is outlined below.

Visual amenity

Approved elements

The fascia sign (Item 2), to the front entrance of the hotel, would replace existing signage which is largely similar in size and design. The principle of this sign is accepted, as it is necessary to aid wayfinding. The sign above the main entrance would comprise individual, internally illuminated letters mounted to a rail. This reflects the existing signage, with the change largely

typographical. The subtext 'APARTHOTELS' would be omitted on the new proposal, thereby simplifying the design in a manner that is beneficial to visual amenity.

The totem sign (Item 6), which would be sited nearby to the carpark entrance at the rear of Gateway House, is supported. The carparking area at this location is shared between a number of different operators/organisations. The totem would aid visitors in locating the carpark and hence the principle of the sign is accepted. The design is restrained, with the information limited to the hotel name and a 'carpark'/arrow combination identifying the carpark location. It would be sited in an open space at the end of the carpark. This segment of the street scene is characterised by a number of different informational signs related to the surrounding carparking areas and hence the new totem would not appear incongruous in this context. The sign would be non-illuminated, which would help the sign further integrate into the wider street scene.

Refused elements

Notwithstanding the principle of high-level signage to the north-facing Ducie Street elevation having been established under app. ref. 114177/AO/2016, the City Council does not support the proposed sign (sign 1) due to its impact on visual amenity. The backing panel of the existing sign is colour-matched to blend into the building's fabric. The proposal seeks a new design which would utilise a dark purple/black colour, designed to make the white lettering appear particularly vivid. Whilst it is accepted that the backing board would achieve this desired affect, it is considered that this would introduce a particularly strident and incongruous element on the elevation. This is of particular concern as the elevation is orientated northwards, affording it visibility along Piccadilly from the city centre, thereby accentuating its prominence. The exact placement and scale of the lettering also results in the 'tail' of the two Ys in the name clipping the edge of the glazing below, disrupting the rectilinear simplicity of the elevation to the further detriment of the building's appearance.

The rear fascia sign (item 3), which would comprise white letters to a large black/purple backing panel, would similarly be detrimental to the design intent of the building and its visual amenity. Whilst, again, the principle of signage at this location is established, it is considered that the design submitted would be detrimental to visual amenity. The panel is unjustifiably large, with large protrusions to either side of the lettering which merely serve to obscure what would otherwise be exposed, redundant fixing points from the existing signage. The backing board cuts across a number of glazed panels, thereby disrupting the rhythm of the elevation. The change in colour and design would also be incongruous and undermined the high quality façade of this building. The front fascia (item 2) is a far more sophisticated sign, being individual letters befitting to this building and its architecture. It is not clear why the sign cannot be mounted on some form of rack so that individual letters can be used similar to item 2.

Public safety

The proposed development is not expected to give rise to any risk to public safety. The illuminance levels are set at 300cd/m², in line with the maximum permitted in the city centre and hence the signage should not give rise to driver distraction. The application was assessed by Environmental Health and Highways and no objections were raised. An appropriate condition, related to light overspill, together with an informative regarding fit out/ construction arrangements and scaffolding licences, which were recommended by consultees, are attached to this decision.

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 policies 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: Approved and Refused

Article 35 Declaration

n/a

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

Approved Elements

Item 2

Item 6

Refused Elements

Item 1

Item 3

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.

1) The proposed signs (Items 1 and 3), by virtue of their design, colour, siting and method of fixing, would fail to respond positively to the architecture of Gateway House. As a result of the use of backing boards to mount the signage, the signs would cut across glazed panels and framework thereby creating incongruous elements that disrupt the clean aesthetic of the building. The dark colour of the boards would appear incongruous on the lighter grey colour of the cladding and window frames, thereby accentuating this incongruity. This would be to the detriment of local visual amenity which is contrary to the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007, policies SP1, EN1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012), saved policy DC14 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995), the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance.

2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents:

-Drawing - Existing & Proposed REV E EXTERNAL SIGNAGE DETAILS received by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority, on 19/01/2024.

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) External lighting shall be designed and installed so as to:
a) control glare and overspill onto nearby properties
b) be controlled to not exceed 300cd/m² during the hours of darkness.

Reason - In the interests of visual amenity and because the proposed works affect the setting of listed heritage assets, and to safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties pursuant to policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

Informatives

1) The applicant is advised that part of the application site falls within land that is currently safeguarded for construction and/or operation of HS2 Phase 2b (Crewe to Manchester and Birmingham to Leeds). Although the Government have announced the cancellation of this section of high-speed rail line, Safeguarding Directions are still in place. However, in line with the commitments made in the accompanying Network North Command Paper, safeguarding is to be amended for HS2 Phase 2b by summer 2024 to allow for any safeguarding needed for Network North schemes.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

High Speed Two (HS2) Limited
Highway Services
Environmental Health

6 - 7 Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH
Cex, 1 Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH
Unit 1, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Ground Floor Room G47, Rail House, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2RP
Unit 16, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Unit 11, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Marks And Spencer Simply Food, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Unit 9, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Ninth Floor, Rail House, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2RP
Fifth Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
Rail House, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2RP
17 Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH
Booth Fairfield Street Entrance, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Yo Sushi, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Booth Platform 10, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Unit 13, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Second Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
Ground Floor, Rail House, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2RP
The Co-operative Food, 11 - 15 Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH
CAFFÈ NERO, Tower Unit A, Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH
Barnardo's, 4 Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH
Ground Floor Rooms G51a G51 And G52, Rail House, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2RP
Unit 2, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Unit 20, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Ground Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
Eighth Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
8 Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH
Unit 25, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
KFC, Unit 23, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Unit 7, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Unit 12, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
WHSmith, Kiosk Fairfield Street Entrance, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Offices, Tower Block, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BP
Unit 3, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Unit 5, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Krispy Kreme, Unit 13A, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Ninth Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
Fourth Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
10 Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH
3 Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH
OLIVER BONAS, Unit 15, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Unit 10, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
Unit 11A, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN

Ground Floor Room G45, Rail House, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2RP
 Unit 11B, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
 Unit 24, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
 WHSmith, Unit 51 Satellite Lounge, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
 Unit 52 Satellite Lounge, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
 Unit 14, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
 Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
 Sixth Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
 Ground Floor Room G41, Rail House, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2RP
 8A Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH
 Bread Box Kiosk, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
 Unit 17, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
 Coffee Kiosk Fairfield Street Entrance, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
 Seventh Floor And Eighth Floor, Rail House, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2RP
 Unit 6, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
 Ground Floor Canteen, Rail House, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2RP
 ACAS, Third Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
 STARBUCKS COFFEE, 3B Piccadilly Place, Manchester, M1 3BN
 Ladbrokes, 2 Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH
 Unit 22, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
 Ground Floor Rooms G47c-G47e And G48-G48a, Rail House, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2RP
 2 Piccadilly Place, Manchester, M1 3BN
 5 Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH
 9 Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH
 16 Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2GH
 Native Aparthotel, Ducie Street, Manchester, M1 2TP
 DODDLE, Unit 26, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2DT
 Unit 21, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
 WHSmith, Unit 4, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
 Unit 8, Piccadilly Station, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester, M1 2BN
 Seventh Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
 First Floor, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
 Article 4 Direction - City Centre PD Restriction - Class B1(a) To C3
 Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - All Exceeding 90M
 Coal Authority - Development Low Risk - Name: DEVELOPMENT_LOW_RISK_AREA
 HS2 Phase 2b Safeguarding Zones - HS2 Safeguarding Zones (June 2022)
 HS2 Phase 2b Safeguarding Zones - HS2 Safeguarding Zones (October 2020)
 Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL