



20th January 2023

Planning and Regeneration

Manchester City Council

Town Hall Extension

Albert Square

Manchester M60 2LA

Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007

Proposed advertisement at 735 Ashton Old Road, Openshaw, Manchester M11 2HD

Dear Sir or Madam,

Please find enclosed an application for advertisement consent for an advertisement hoarding on the gable wall of 735 Ashton Old Road, Openshaw.

The advertisement will consist of a modern digital “48-sheet” display capable of being operated from a central location and significantly reducing vehicle trips for reposting. The display will show static images on rotation and will be illuminated in accordance with ILP Guidelines and industry best practice.

The Application Site and Surroundings

The site consists of the gable wall of 735 Ashton Old Road, a two-storey brick-built building with butterfly roof, currently in commercial use with a takeaway at ground floor. Part of the building is rendered and has recently been painted black by the tenants to improve the



appearance. The gable wall (Figure 1) presents a blank elevation onto an area of incidental open land used for car parking.



Figure 1 – Gable wall of proposal site

The gable wall has supported a 48-sheet advert in the past and more recently has supported temporary business advertising, as illustrated in Figure 2, although there is no history of consent.



Figure 2 – Unauthorised advertising previously at the site



The use of gable ends of buildings to support advertising hoardings dates back over a hundred years and is a traditional form of advertising in Manchester and across the Country. It is also not uncommon to digital billboards on the key routes into Cities as they slowly replace the traditional paper and paste model. In 2016 Manchester City Council approved the installation of two digital 48 sheet advertisements on a similar site 250m to the east of the application site, as shown in Figure 3 (Application ref: 111557/AOH/2016/N2).



Figure 3 – Advertisement at 821 to 839 Ashton Old Road

Elsewhere on Ashton Old Road, an appeal was allowed for a digital 48 sheet 1.5km to the west of the site (Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/Z/21/3269491).

There are numerous other examples of gable end advertising across the City, including less commercial sites, such as at 10 Kirkmanshulme Lane (Figure 4), which was also granted at appeal (Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/Z/19/3243383).

There is no planning history relevant to advertising on the application site or any of the adjacent land and the site is not under any restrictive planning designation in the local plan. It is not within a Conservation Area and the building is not listed either statutorily or locally. There are no other heritage assets in close proximity.



Figure 4 – Digital 48 sheet on gable end

The Proposal

The proposal is for a standard 48-sheet digital hoarding (6m x 3m) which will display multiple static advertisements on rotation. The display will be positioned on the gable wall of 735 Old Ashton Road at first floor level, 3.495m from the ground. The proposed new display technology is lightweight, durable, efficient and can be easily erected within a day. The quality of the display image will mimic that of a traditional poster and paste display, with the contrast adjusting to the ambient light to ensure that it is appropriately illuminated at all times and does not cause glare in low light conditions.

Over the past 5-10 years a steady increase in the amount of digital 48 sheets has been accompanied by a major reduction in the number of poster and paste panels, as advertising operators look to consolidate their assets to the best locations. The ability to carry six advertisements on rotation every ten seconds takes up a substantial amount of advertising demand on one single display.

The proposed display will operate in accordance with the standard conditions applied to all advertisements and with special conditions that are now well established across the industry, including and are set out at **Appendix 1**.



Within the scope of this proposal, the opportunity will be taken to repair the gable wall and improve the overall look of the building, following on from recent improvements undertaken by the tenant, who has painted the building black, in line with the branding of the takeaway restaurant. These small improvements will incrementally lift and regenerate the area. The image below from 2019 illustrates the positive direction the landowner and leaseholders are headed with the site as a whole.



Figure 5 – 2019 Streetview image

Planning Policy and Legislation

The legislative framework for the control of advertisements is contained within The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (the “Regulations”). Regulation 3 states that advertising should be controlled in the interest of amenity and public safety taking into account the provisions of the development plan, in so far as they are material, in addition to any other relevant factors.

The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. In accordance with Paragraph 136 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account cumulative impacts. The NPPF is currently under review, but there are no changes proposed to Paragraph 136.



As described in the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) the regime is a “lighter touch” than the system for obtaining planning permission for development. The NPPG also clarifies that a local plan does not have to contain advertisement policies and that if such policies are considered necessary to protect the unique character of a particular area, these should be evidence-based.

Manchester’s Policy towards advertising is set out in Paragraphs DC15.1 to DC15.3 of the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan. In determining applications for free standing hoardings and wall mounted posters the Council will take account of the following matters in assessing these interests:

- a. the general location of the proposed development and the effect on visual amenity;

The proposal is located on a commercial site next to a major road where the environment is robust and proposals for investment and regeneration are to be supported..

- b. the scope for posters and hoardings to make a positive contribution to the locality;

The proposal follows on from other recent improvements to the building and will repair the rest of the damaged gable. It will add colour and interest to a blank façade.

- c. the design of the structures, and the relationship with any premises on which they are located;

The proposals are located on a gable in a traditional position for advertising. The signage is proportional to the façade and does not obscure any architectural features.

- d. the effect of the proposal on permanent redevelopment of the land;

The proposals are on an existing building that is in use with a new tenant. There are no proposals to develop the site or adjacent land.

- e. public safety resulting from the positioning of the design of the display;



The proposed advert is located on a straight single carriageway road on the near side where road signage is traditionally positioned.

- f. the ease with which the structure is capable of being satisfactorily maintained;

The site benefits from easy access from the front.

- g. the use of hoardings to screen vacant sites or buildings during development, or where development is known to be imminent;

Not applicable

- h. the use of hoardings as part of a scheme to prevent access by unauthorised users onto land pending development;

Not applicable

- i. the use of hoardings to disguise or improve the appearance of unsightly features, operations or activities;

Not applicable, although the proposal will cover a blank wall and repair the façade.

- j. the number of advertisements in the locality and their cumulative effect on visual amenity.

There are no other advertisements visible in the same view as the proposal.

The proposals are therefore compliant with all of the above criteria.

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;

As described above, the proposal will not interfere with the use of the building or any of its architectural features.



- b. they should be in scale with the locality and relate properly to the site on which they stand;

The proposals are within scale to the property and are of the same scale as other advertisements granted consent nearby.

- c. they should be unobtrusive and should not intrude into residential neighbourhoods and areas of high amenity value;

The level of illuminance will be controlled to ensure a muted appearance at night. Displays can be turned down or curfews applied if any concerns are raised regarding light spill.

- 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 proposal is appropriately located and will be appropriately controlled via condition.

The proposals meet all of the above criteria and are therefore local policy compliant.

Planning Considerations

The impact of the proposed advert in amenity and public safety terms is considered as follows:

Amenity

The proposal site is on the gable end of a commercial building at the start of a commercial section of Ashton Old Road. Traditionally the gable end of buildings is used to support advertising and as such the proposal would not present an unusual or jarring feature on the approach.

The wider area is mixed in character, but whilst there are residential properties on the approach, they are set back from the road behind a line of trees and are therefore not seen in the same context of the advert. Views of the adverts would be seen in the more commercial context of the development behind and on the opposite side of the road. The nearest



residential property is over 20m away and would not be affected by light spill at the levels of luminance proposed.

The signage has been carefully sized, positioned and orientated to fill the available space on the gable wall without presenting a dominant or overbearing feature. It will not block any windows or obscure any architectural features of the host building.

Although the signage is located high up on the building it is not visible in long views due to the line of trees on the approach.

Overall, the signage will be muted in terms of its illumination, it will be appropriately sized for the purpose and for the building, and will only be visible in close proximity to the site. As such it will cause no material harm to visual amenity.

Public Safety

When assessing public safety, the key considerations are whether the location is appropriate (i.e. undemanding on the driver) and whether there is potential for glare or unusual distraction. The proposed location of the signage is on a straight single carriageway in a typical urban environment where drivers would be expected to be able to easily assimilate the environment and surrounding activity whilst maintaining concentration on the driving task.

The nearest pedestrian crossing point is 94m away and the signage would be far in the distance and obscured by trees on the approach to the crossing. As such it could have minimal impact on driving behaviour.

The signage is of a type now typically seen in locations across Manchester and the rest of the Country. The conditions proposed at Appendix 1 are now industry standard and will ensure that the display is controlled to ensure there is no unacceptable risk to public safety.

Conclusion

The applicant seeks advertisement consent for a digital 48 sheet advertising display on the gable wall of the application property. The display will show static advertisements on a ten second rotation, carrying a maximum of six advertising campaigns at a time. As a part of the proposal the existing building façade will be repaired, complementing recent improvements undertaken by the tenant.



The investment in the building improves the amenity of the area as a whole, and the advertisement will add visual interest and vibrancy. The design and positioning of the advertisement on the building has been carefully considered to assimilate into the built environment, and the proposal will have no features that unduly attract attention and that may distract drivers. Overall, the proposal could not be said to be harmful to amenity of public safety and it meets the detailed policy requirements set out in the development plan. In accordance with the Advertisement Regulations it should therefore be granted express consent.

Application Submission

In order to complete the application, please find attached the following documentation:

- Completed application forms;
- Letter Statement (this letter);
- Architectural drawings including;
 - Site Location Plan
 - Existing Site Plan
 - Proposed Site Plan
 - Existing and Proposed Elevations

Additionally, we will arrange payment to Manchester Council via the Planning Portal.

I trust that the above is clear and we look forward to receiving notification that the application has been registered in due course. Should you have any queries in relation to any of the attached information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Ben Kelly MRTPI

Director

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