

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Proposed Brass Vertical Sign: Hawksmoor, Deansgate, Manchester

Prepared in support of:

- Advertisement Consent
- Listed Building Consent

1. Site Identification

Property: Hawksmoor Restaurant

Address: Deansgate, Manchester

Local Planning Authority: Manchester City Council

Hawksmoor occupies a prominent historic commercial building on Deansgate within Manchester City Centre. The building is a designated heritage asset (statutory list entry to be confirmed within the application documentation) and forms part of the historic commercial core of the city.

2. Planning Policy Context

This statement has been prepared in accordance with:

- Section 16 of the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023)**
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (Sections 16 and 66 where relevant)
- Local heritage policies within Manchester's Local Plan

Particular regard is given to NPPF paragraphs:

- **Para. 194** – Requirement for proportionate description of significance
- **Para. 200** – Sustaining and enhancing significance
- **Para. 205** – Great weight to conservation of designated assets
- **Para. 206** – Viable use consistent with conservation
- **Paras. 207–208** – Assessment and weighing of harm

3. Description of the Heritage Asset

3.1 Historical Significance

The building forms part of Manchester's late nineteenth/early twentieth-century commercial expansion, reflecting the city's status as a major industrial and mercantile centre.

Deansgate historically developed as one of Manchester's principal commercial routes, lined with architecturally ambitious buildings that expressed economic confidence. The building contributes to this narrative of urban growth and commercial prosperity.

3.2 Architectural Significance

The building's significance derives from:

- High-quality masonry façade
- Strong vertical composition
- Classical or neo-classical detailing
- Original window openings and structural hierarchy
- Robust ground-floor commercial articulation

The façade displays a clear vertical rhythm, with pilasters or structural bays rising through upper storeys.

3.3 Technical and Material Significance

The building demonstrates traditional construction techniques, including:

- Loadbearing masonry
- Stone façade detailing
- Traditional mortar joints
- Historic metal and joinery elements

The masonry façade and detailing represent key elements of the building's special interest.

3.4 Setting and Contribution to Townscape

The building contributes positively to:

- The historic streetscape of Deansgate
- The architectural coherence of the city centre
- The visual character of Manchester's commercial core

Projecting signage has historically formed part of the commercial character of such streets.

4. Description of the Proposed Works

The proposal comprises:

- Installation of one vertically oriented projecting sign.
- Fabrication in brass tone metal
- Black painted lettering reading “Hawksmoor” on white acrylic.
- Internally illuminated with warm white LED
- Wall mounted and fixed via discreet mechanical fixings.
- Wiring will be cables to align with existing stonework detail and be fixed in as discreet a manner as possible.

The sign has been designed to be:

- Subordinate to the façade.
- Proportionate in scale.
- Aligned with architectural bays.
- Installed without obscuring decorative features.
- Tonally suiting the exterior stone as it blends with the tones of the stonework
- No structural alterations are proposed.

The sign is proportionate to the host façade and follows a similar design to an existing sign to an adjacent unit Rosa’s Thai, 184 Deansgate M33WB. Reference image attached.



5. Identification of Fabric Affected

In accordance with Manchester City Council's validation requirements, this section clearly identifies any original fabric affected.

The works will involve:

- Drilling of a limited number of small-diameter screw holes.
- Fixings to be located in mortar joints wherever feasible.
- Avoidance of drilling into stone masonry units unless technically unavoidable.

The proposal does **not** involve:

- Removal of stonework.
- Cutting back of mouldings or architectural detailing.
- Removal of historic joinery.
- Concealment of architectural features.
- Alteration to window openings or structural elements.

The intervention is minor and fully reversible. Should the sign be removed in future, mortar repairs could be undertaken without permanent loss of historic fabric.

6. Assessment of Impact on Significance

6.1 Impact on Architectural Character

The sign has been designed to complement the vertical emphasis of the façade. Its brass finish is sympathetic to the building's material palette and reflects a high-quality commercial premises.

Due to its modest scale and careful positioning:

- Architectural detailing remains fully legible.
- The façade composition is preserved.
- The vertical rhythm of the building is respected.

6.2 Impact on Historic Fabric

The only physical intervention is limited drilling for fixings. By locating fixings within mortar joints, harm to original stonework is minimised.

The degree of physical change is minor and reversible.

6.3 Assessment of Harm (NPPF Section 16)

In accordance with paragraph 205 of the NPPF, great weight has been given to the conservation of the designated heritage asset.

The proposal results in:

No harm or, at most, negligible less-than-substantial harm due to:

- Minimal physical intervention
- Reversible installation
- No loss of architectural features
- No change to building form or massing

Under paragraph 208, where less-than-substantial harm is identified, it must be weighed against public benefits.

7. Public Benefits and Justification

The proposal delivers the following public benefits:

- Supports the optimum viable use of the building (para. 206).
- Enhances legibility of a commercial premises within a busy urban environment.
- Contributes positively to the vitality of Deansgate.
- Introduces a high-quality, durable material consistent with the status of the building.

Clear signage is necessary for commercial operation and contributes to the economic sustainability of the heritage asset.

The proposal therefore:

- Sustains the significance of the asset (para. 200).
- Preserves its architectural character.
- Ensures ongoing active use.

8. Compliance with Manchester City Council Validation Requirements

This statement provides:

- ✓ Proportionate assessment of significance
- ✓ Description of heritage asset and its setting
- ✓ Identification of affected fabric
- ✓ Clear explanation of works
- ✓ Assessment of impact

- ✓ Justification under NPPF Section 16
- ✓ Explanation of reversibility

The level of detail is proportionate to the minor nature of the works and the scale of intervention.

9. Summary

The proposed brass vertical sign at Hawksmoor, Deansgate:

- Preserves the architectural and historic interest of the building.
- Involves minimal and reversible intervention.
- Does not remove or obscure significant architectural fabric.
- Sustains the building's viable commercial use.

The proposal accords with Section 16 of the NPPF and relevant local policy and satisfies Manchester City Council's heritage validation requirements.