

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 144895/AO/2026
Date registered valid: 14 January 2026
Proposal: Retention of projection sign
Address: 1 Cross Street, Manchester, M2 1HX
Ward(s): Piccadilly Ward

Applicant: Hotel Chocolat
Agent (if any): Mr Sam Harper Firstplan
Case officer: James Bridgman
Tel: 0161 219 6202
Email: james.bridgman@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve
Date of recommendation: 10 March 2026

Application details

Type of application: Advertisement Consent

Development type: Advertisements

Date of site visit: 15 January 2026

Standard consultations:

Printed: 15 January 2026 Expired: 5 February 2026

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 15 January 2026 Expired: 5 February 2026

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: Not applicable

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

The site relates to a ground floor commercial unit in the Arndale shopping centre located at 1 Cross Street. The unit was the former branch of the bank of Halifax but has been vacant for a number of years. A louvred panel is currently affixed above the fascia and shopfront.

A separate application has recently been approved for the retention of the shopfront and a proposed hand painted mural.

The proposal site is located in Manchester City Centre and therefore the surrounding area has a wide variety of uses including, residential, offices, restaurants, cafes, bars, retail and commercial outlets in the immediate area with associated advertisements on their respective buildings.

The building is not listed, and it is not located within a Conservation Area. The site is located adjacent to St Ann's Square Conservation Area, the boundary of which runs through the centre of Cross Street.

The applicant site is directly opposite the Grade II listed Royal Exchange on the other side of Cross Street, so the proposals should be considered within the context of the adjacent conservation area and listed buildings.

Description of development

Advertisement consent is sought for the retention of projection sign

- Internally illuminated projection sign with a depth of 40mm

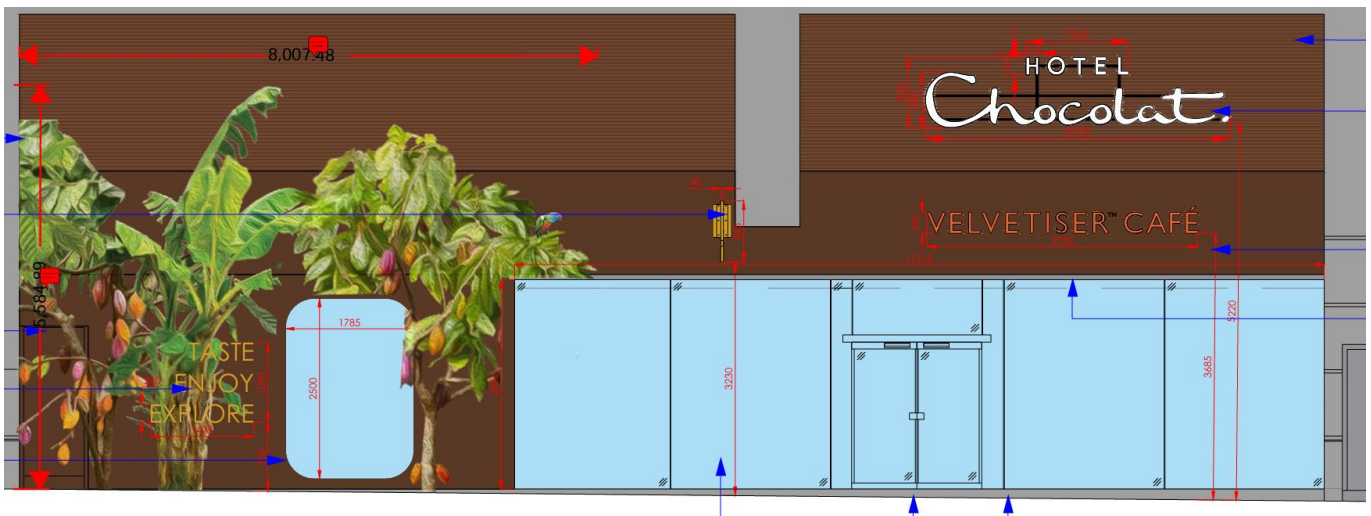


Figure 1 – Proposed shopfront elevation

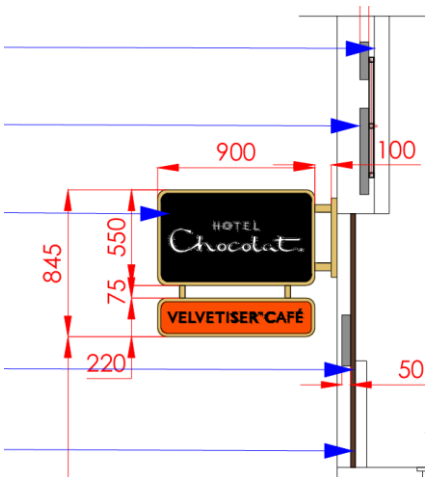


Figure 2 – Proposed projection sign

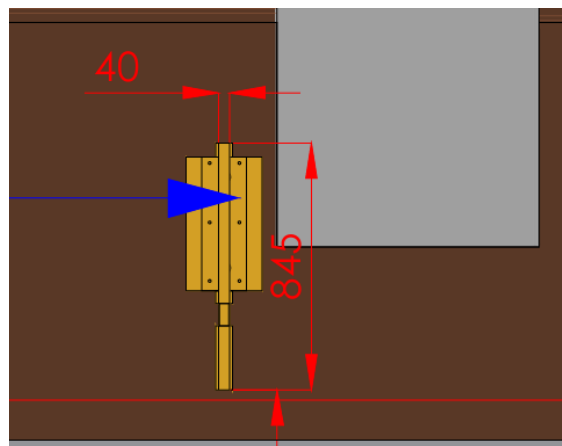


Figure 3 – Depth of projection sign

For the avoidance of doubt, the individual letter fascia sign and higher-level louvre sign was approved/consented under application 142254/AO/2025 in June 2025. This application seeks to regularise the projection sign as it has been sited in an alternative location as previously approved 142254/AO/2025

The signage 'TASTE', 'ENJOY' and 'EXPLORE' with individual letters fixed to the shopfront would fall under deemed consent of Class 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992.



Figure 4 – Photograph of shopfront and projection sign

Consultations & Notification Responses

Publicity - Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties. No representations have been received because of this publicity

Highways Services – No objection

Environmental Health – No objections subject to condition on luminance levels.

TfGM – No objection but acknowledge there is advice on safe working near a Metrolink line and would not be relevant as the proposal is retrospective.

Relevant Planning History

144894/FO/2026 - Retention of shopfront with proposed mural. Decision: Approved 5 March 2026

142254/AO/2025 - Installation of 1no. internally illuminated sign, 1no. internally illuminated fascia sign and 1no. internally illuminated projecting sign. Decision: Approved 11 June 2025

Policy

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.

Places for Everyone Plan – Joint Development Plan Document, for nine of the 10 boroughs which make up Greater Manchester adopted on 21st of March 2024:

- Policy JP-P1 - Sustainable Places
- Policy JP-Strat2 – City Centre
- Policy JP-P2 – Heritage

The Manchester Core Strategy – Development Plan Document 2012-2027 (“the Core Strategy”) was adopted by the City Council on the 11th of July 2012:

- Policy SP1 – Spatial Principles
- Policy EN1 – Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas
- Policy EN3 – Heritage
- Policy DM1 – Development Management

The Unitary Development Plan for Manchester – For the reasons outlined below the following saved UDP Policies are of relevance to this application:

- Policy DC14 – Shop Fronts and Related Signs

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- Policy JP-P1 - Sustainable Places
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National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Chapter 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
- Chapter 7 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Chapter 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Issues

Since the approval of the previous consent for advertisements under 142254/AO/2025, the projection sign has been sited in a slightly different location. Previously it was proposed to the column but during construction due to the weight and requirements for wind loadings for fixings it was unable to be installed.

The projection sign has been installed to the fascia level following the installation of a new marine grade ply shopfront.

Due to the proximity adjacent to the column, the projection sign appears slightly awkward and preferably would have been located at either end of the fascia level. However, it is recognised that it has been installed where there is timber reinforcement to a section of the shopfront to maintain the structural integrity of the sign.

Additionally, the bracket of the projection sign has been increased in size to accommodate the size and weight of the projection sign. The bracket does not have any visible fixings and overall has limited visual impact on the shopfront.

Part a) of saved policy DC14.5 (Shops and Related Signs) states that “signs should not normally be positioned other than at fascia level.” The projection sign is located at fascia level inline with existing signs on the applicant premises and adjacent units.

The projection sign is small in scale and would have a depth of 40mm. The slim appearance is considered to it blend with the modern ground floor shopfront and would align with the proposed fascia signage.

The site is adjacent to a conservation area and the Grade II Listed Royal Exchange Building. The proposed adverts are appropriate within this location and would not detract nor harm these heritage assets

The proposal is consistent with PfE Policies JP-P2, Core Strategy Policies EN1, EN3 and DM1, Unitary Development Plan for Manchester DC14, and the relevant sections of the NPPF.

Residential amenity

In the interests of amenity, a condition will be attached restricting the maximum luminance levels of 300 cd/m². The sign would be of such a brightness where the signs would not detract from local visual amenity and general neighbouring amenity.

Subject to a condition that would limit the proposed advertisement's luminance, it is considered the proposal is acceptable in this regard and therefore accords with Core Strategy Policy DM1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highways

The proposal includes the installation of a projection sign that would overhang the public highway. Highways do object to the proposal and advised a projection over license is not required.

The proposed drawings show a proposed 'CACAO LED YOU HERE' inlay into the ground. This would be located within the forecourt/applicant site and would not impact on the adopted footpath.

The illuminance level for the advertisement would not be so bright as to cause an unacceptable safety risk to highway users.

The proposal therefore accords with Core Strategy Policies SP1 and DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policy DC14, National Planning Practice Guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework.

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: Approve

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval

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.

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

- o Proposed Shopfront Elevation: 020

All received by the Local Planning Authority on 8 January 2026

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 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3) The maximum luminance of the signage hereby approved shall not exceed 300 cd/m² in brightness at any time.

Reason - In the interests of visual and residential amenity pursuant to policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy and saved policies DC14.1 and DC18.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services
Environmental Health
Transport For Greater Manchester
Metrolink

5 Cross Street, Manchester, M2 1WE
Advertising Right JC Decaux Outside 1, Cross Street, Manchester, M2 1HX
8 - 10 Cross Street, Manchester, M2 7AE
3 Cross Street, Manchester, M2 1WE
16 Market Street, Manchester, M1 1PT
28 Market Street, Manchester, M1 1PW
30 Market Street, Manchester, M1 1PW
26 Market Street, Manchester, M1 1PW

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - City Centre PD Restriction - Class B1(a) To C3
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
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL