

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no.	144061/AO/2025	
Date registered valid:	6 January 2026	
Proposal:	Installation of 2no internally illuminated projecting signs together with external vinyl.	
Address:	Atlas Chambers, Ship Canal House, 96 - 98 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WU	
Ward(s):	Deansgate	Ward
Applicant:	Costa Ltd	
Agent (if any):	Miss Anisha Ahmed Savills	
Case officer:	Sam Tel: 0161 219 Email: sam.elliott@manchester.gov.uk	Elliott 2856
Recommendation:	Refuse	
Date of recommendation:	11/02/2026	

Application details

Type of application:	Advertisement Consent
Development type:	Advertisements
Date of site visit:	07/01/2026
Standard consultations:	
Printed: 8 January 2026	Expired: 29 January 2026
Neighbour notifications	
Printed: 8 January 2026	Expired: 29 January 2026

Site notice

No site notice has been produced

Press advert

No press advert had been published

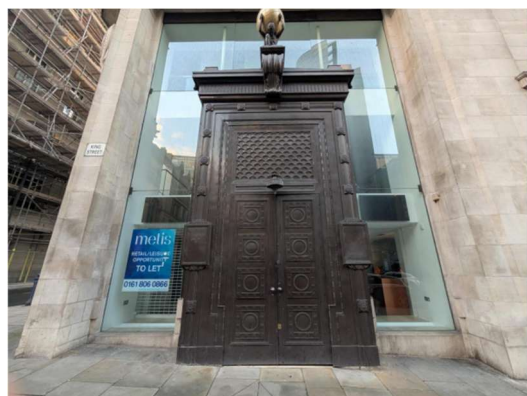
Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

The application concerns the ground, mezzanine and first floor of the Grade II-listed Atlas Chambers, which sits on the corner of King Street and Brown Street. The building complex is comprised of two other listings, namely the Grade II listed Ship Canal House and Lombard Chambers.

The former banking hall building adopts a classic twentieth century style, with its historic significance derived partially from its architectural features, including its grand proportions, a rectilinear, orthogonal design and vertical emphasis, with Portland stone masonry, bronze doorway set in the centre and surmounted by a bronze Atlas with golden globe, a bronze plaque on the corner and a cartouche above this. While the façade has been modified to some degree, with a plate-glass glazing either side and above the bronze door, as well as to the Brown Street Bays, the modern elements retain its grandiose proportions and design.





The site is currently vacant, occupied by Hervia for the sale of clothing between April 2021 and June 2023. Prior to this, Virgin Money occupied the Site from September 2012 to July 2019, operating as an office, restaurant and lounge area.

Listed building: Grade II

Conservation area: Upper King Street Conservation Area 1970

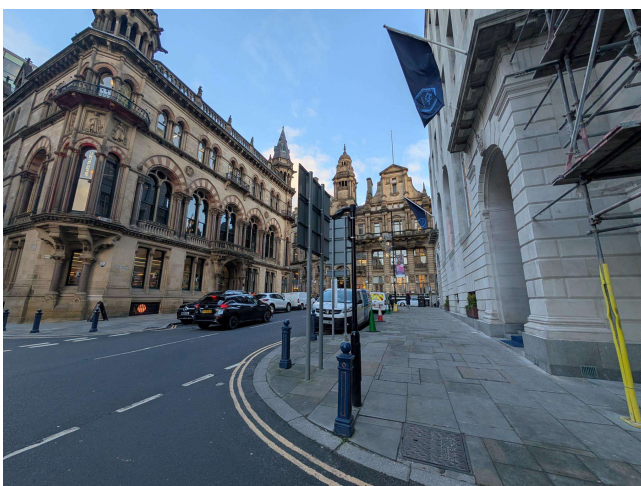
Tree Preservation Order:

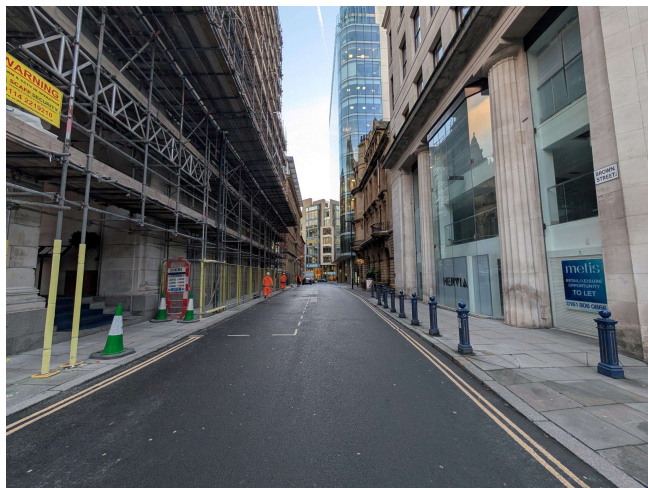
Description of area

The area relates to King Street in Manchester City Centre. The area lies within the Upper King Street Conservation Area (1970) and there are fourteen listed buildings on the street including the Grade I-listed former Bank of England building at number 82, the Grade II*-listed former Midland Bank at number 100, the Grade II-listed Pall Mall Court opposite the site, and the Grade II-listed Former Reform Club Manchester Club.

The character of the area comprises office, retail, dining and drinking uses. It is in a highly sustainable location, with a wide availability of public transport routes in the vicinity.

Advertisement in the street scene and within the setting of the Upper King Street Conservation Area is relatively restrained, with visible signage to nearby listed buildings including a roundel sign to the King Street Pizza Express approved in 2014, an ornate hanging sign to the Brown Street Flight Club approved in 2018, and an unauthorised bulky roundel to the Brown Street Black Cat Club.

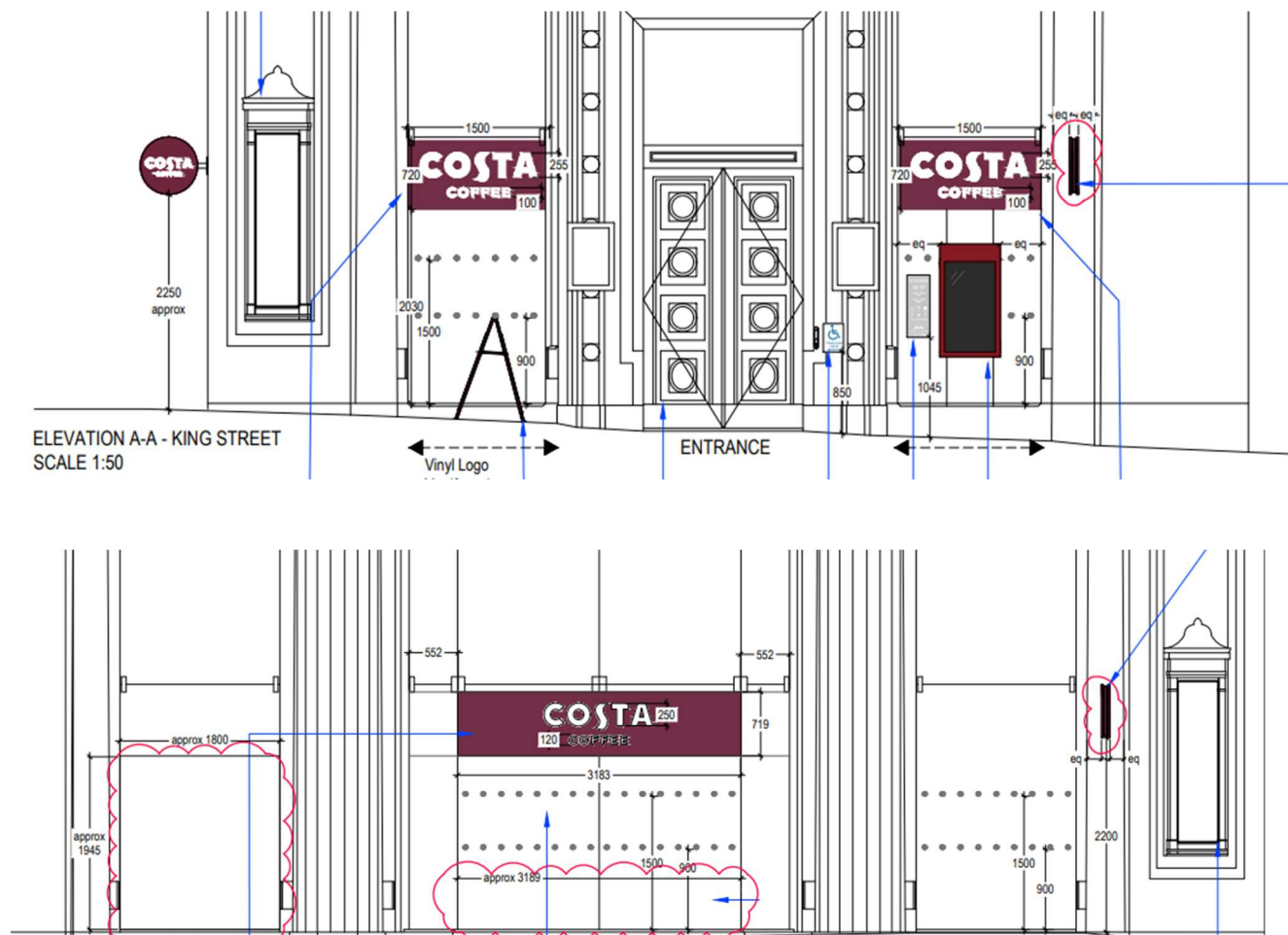




Description of development

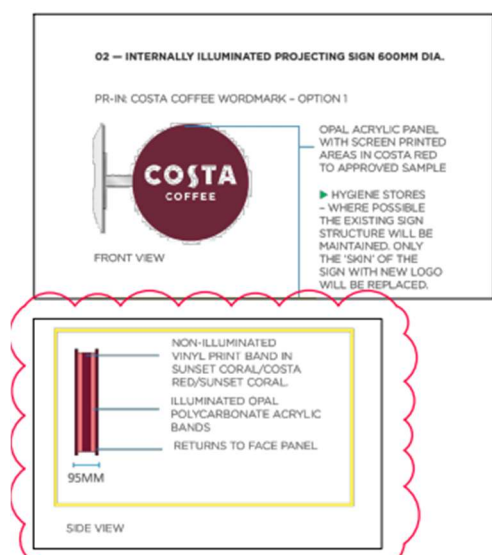
The Council had requested that the applicant provide drawings showing only the external signage within the scope of this advertisement consent application. The applicant submitted amended drawings 11/02/2026 which included internal elements pertaining to the listed building consent application. For the avoidance of doubt, advertisement consent is sought for the 2 no. external projecting signs, with 1 no. each to Brown Street and King Street and the various external vinyl stickers referenced within the drawings.

Details of the height of the King Street sign to the right side of the brass door have been omitted, however based on previous drawings it would be sited approximately 2500mm from external floor level. The Brown Street projecting sign would be sited approximately 2250mm from external floor level and in proximity to the bronze corner plaque.



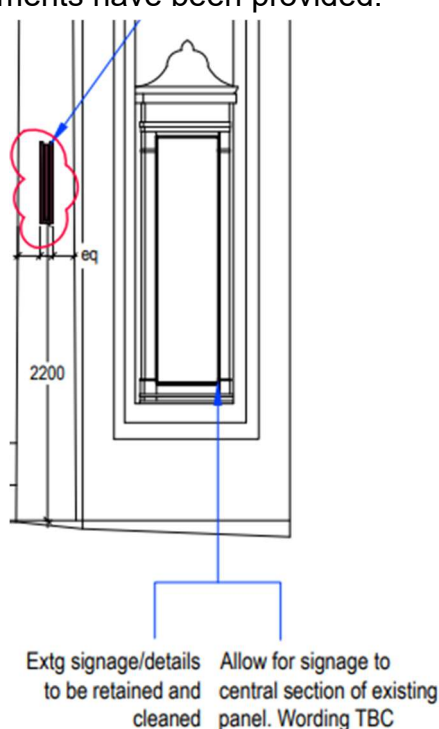
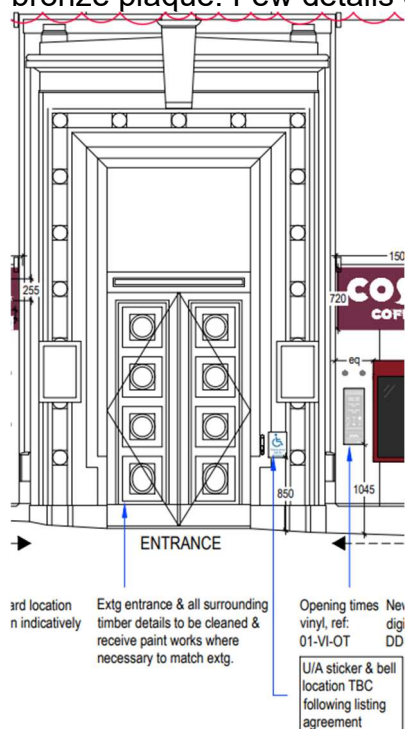
They would be circular 'lollipop' signs with a diameter of 600mm and a depth of 95mm. It would have a support arm, and while the amended plans do not include this information, it is assumed based on the submission of earlier plans that the support arm would extend 150mm of the external face of the elevation, with an approximate total projection of 755mm.

They would have acrylic faces and be internally illuminated with illuminance levels of 600cd/m² to exhibit the 'Costa Coffee' branding in white text with a 6500k cool white lighting through an opal acrylic face, and have a maroon background. Their sides would feature 2no. coral vinyl bands.



No details have been provided regarding the size of the baseplate which would help affix the signage to the stonework. The amended drawings have omitted fixing details previously provided, and it is assumed that the signs would be fixed via RAWL bolts through a base plate with a stainless-steel shroud as previously indicated.

The amended drawings make reference to a number of additional vinyl elements, including the placement of a sticker on the building's bronze door and signage to the central section of the bronze plaque. Few details of these elements have been provided.



It is noted that application 144060/FO/2025 has been approved 09/02/2026 granting permission for use as a café. This application is now being considered alongside 144062/LO/2025: Listed Building Consent for the installation of signage, internal and external alterations and associated works.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Notification:

Occupiers of neighbouring buildings were notified via notification letters. No representations were received in response to the application.

Highways:

- Projection over license required
- Unclear headroom clearance, clarification sought but must meet 2.5m.
- Luminance acceptable from a highways perspective.
- Detail sought on installation arrangements.
- Applicant should be made aware of highways management requirements

Environmental Health:

- The 600 cd/m2 luminance level proposed exceeds the 300 cd/m2 criteria

Policy Context

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.

The following policies are considered relevant to this application:

Places for Everyone

- JP-Strat2 – City Centre
- JP-C5 – Streets for All

- JP-P1 – Sustainable Places
- JP-P2 – Heritage

The Adopted Core Strategy for the City of Manchester

- SP1 – Spatial Principles
- CC1 - Primary Economic Development Focus : City Centre and Fringe
- CC5 – Transport
- CC7 – Mixed Use Development
- CC9 – Design and Heritage
- EN1 – Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas
- EN3 – Heritage
- T1 – Sustainable Transport
- DM1 – Development Management

The Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester

- DC14 – Shop Fronts and Related Signs
- DC18 – Conservation Areas
- DC19 – Listed Buildings

NPPF

- Section 12 (Achieving Well Designed Places)
- Section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment)

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990

- Section 66
- Section 72

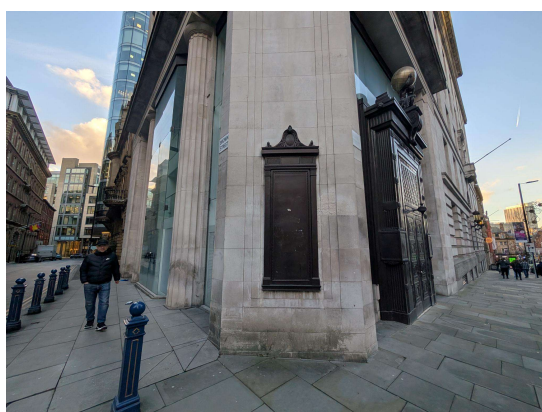
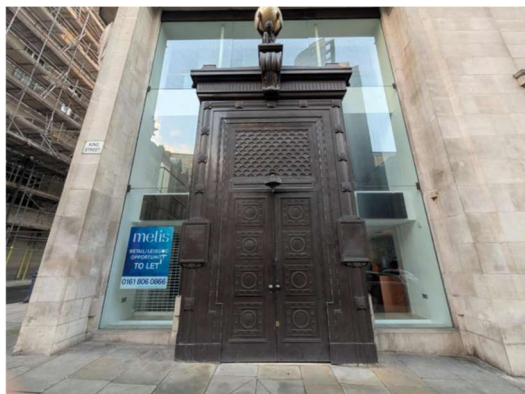
Shopfront and Signage Design Guide

Issues

Amongst other things and in general terms, PfE Policies JP-Strat2 and JP-P1, as well as Core Strategy Policies SP1, EN1, and DM1 require that development has good design, improves the appearance and character of the area, is visually stimulating, and creates interesting environments, taking account of matters including siting, layout, form, massing, materials and detail. PfE Policy JP-P2, Core Strategy policies CC9, EN1 and EN3, saved UDP policy DC19, Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 and guidance contained in sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework outline the desirability of protecting the general setting of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas and requires the City Council to preserve or enhance their setting. With specific regard to advertisements, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies DC14.1 and DC14.5 further require that signage is in keeping with the character of the building and of the area in which it is located, and respect the architectural form of the building. The Control of Advertisements Regulations also require an accounting of the general characteristics of the locality, including of historic and architectural interest.

As outlined above, the listed building is a former banking hall building constructed in a classic twentieth century style. Its historic significance is partially but substantially derived from its impressive architectural features. This consists of its grand proportions and rectilinear and orthogonal design, as well as its materiality, with Portland stone masonry, a distinct bronze doorway set in the centre of the Kings Street elevation, which is surmounted by an ornamental bronze Atlas with golden globe. Bronze as a material feature is replicated elsewhere on the building via a plaque to the unit's corner with a cartouche above. While the façades have been modified to some degree, with a plate-glass glazing either side and above the bronze door, as

well as to the Brown Street bays, these modern elements replicate the grandiose proportions and vertical emphasis of the building and respect its original design language.



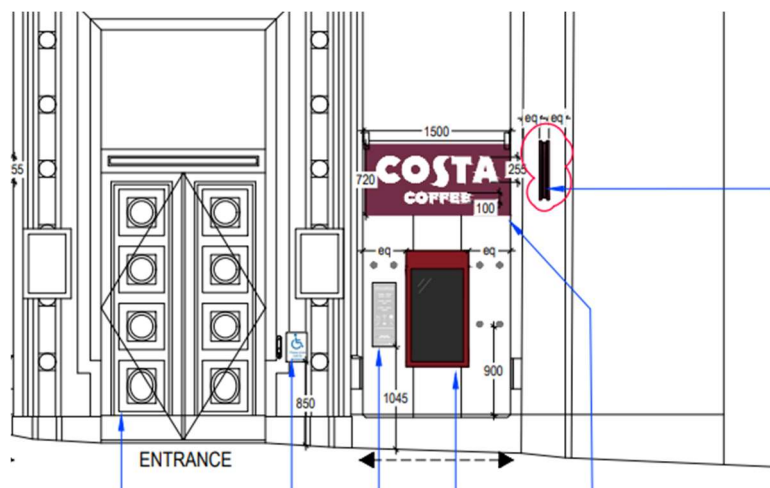
Principally, the proposed materiality of the projecting signage is not considered to be commensurate with the listed status of the building, nor its unique materiality. The proposed acrylic faces and vinyl side strips would appear as particularly low-quality materials detracting from the impressive material quality of the masonry and brass work of Atlas Chambers which comprise its remaining and most significant historic fabric. Similarly, the stainless-steel support arm and base plate shroud would appear as inferior material when seen together with the building's brass door and plaque. The King Street sign would be seen directly in conjunction with the building's brass door where the Brown Street sign would be seen immediately adjacent to the bronze plaque.

While it is accepted that the external elevations feature modern material interventions through the double height glazing, it is considered that the proposed materiality reads as distinctly modern, while also being of low quality and failing to correspond to the existing material palette of the building which constitutes its most significant historic fabric. This would result in an incongruous and harmful addition to the building's appearance.

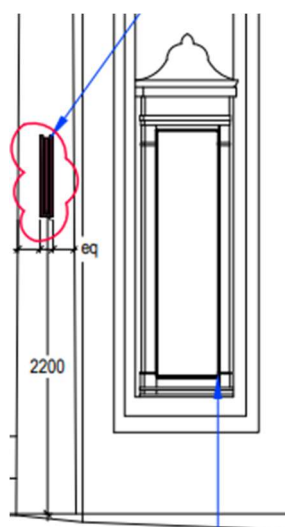
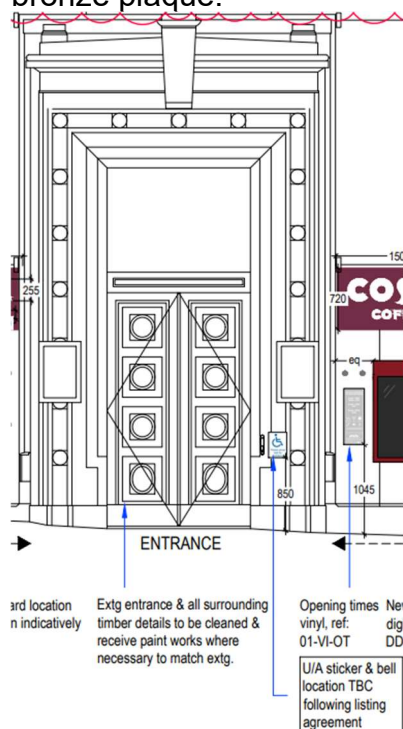
With the above in mind, it is moreover considered that 95mm depth of the signs would make them appear excessively bulky and overly prominent additions to the listed building's elevations. It is noted that the depth of the sign is significantly in excess of the 30mm depth outlined in the Council's Shopfront and Design Guide. Moreover the circular lollipop shape of the signage bears little resemblance to the rectilinear and orthogonal architectural design of the building. These factors work to poorly integrate the signage into the building's elevations and add to the incongruity of the signage by a further additional degree.

It is noted that, while not forming part of this application, the proposed projecting signs would be seen together with the 3no. internal aluminium sign trays proposed to the mezzanine bulkheads and the double sided digital advertisement behind the glazing as part of listed building consent application 144062/LO/2025 running concurrently with this application.

Notwithstanding that the projecting signs in isolation are not considered appropriate, it is also considered that, when taken together, the proposed signage strategy for the unit would appear fragmented and overly cluttered, creating a cluster of disparate and modern acrylic, aluminium and LED signage elements which cumulatively increase the level of harm to the building's appearance. It is also noted that the projecting signs are shown not to line through with the 'fascia' created within the mezzanine, with the signage placement appearing incoherent and haphazard as a whole.



The amended drawings make reference to a number of additional vinyl elements, including the placement of a sticker on the building's bronze door and signage to the central section of the bronze plaque.



Extg signage/details to be retained and cleaned

Allow for signage to central section of existing panel. Wording TBC

While few details of these elements have been provided, these elements are strongly resisted by the Council and would view them as incurring significant harm to the remaining historic fabric of the building.

For the above reasons, the proposed signage is considered to result in less than substantial harm to the Grade II listed building.

In consideration of the immediate street scene and wider impact on Upper King Street Conservation Area, it is noted that signage in this area is relatively restrained, where the proposal would exhibit disparate fractured elements comprised of a materiality and design not reflecting that of the host building.

In view of the above, it is considered that the proposal is out of keeping with the generally restrained signage within the street scene and harmful to the setting of the Conservation Area by virtue of its failure to respond to the unique features of Atlas Chambers and addition of cluttered signage, resulting in less than substantial harm to its setting.

Public Safety

Highways have reviewed the application outlining the Council's 2.5m headroom clearance requirement. The Brown Street sign would not have 2500mm headroom clearance. The applicant was informed of this 20/01/2026 and stated 23/01/2026 that amended drawings were being produced to ensure headroom clearance compliance. However, the amended drawings received 11/02/2026 still specified a 2250mm clearance. On the basis of the plans submitted, the proposed external signage could be a danger to the safety of pedestrians particularly given its proximity to the corner of Brown and King Street. Had the scheme been otherwise acceptable in design terms, the Council would have sought a raised height to secure this clearance.

Highways also noted that a Projection Over License would have been required and had the scheme been considered otherwise acceptable an informative would have been recommended specifying applicant requirements in this regard.

The application form states that the projecting signs would have luminance levels of 600cd/m². Environmental Health commented on the luminance levels stating that this exceeded Council criteria for luminance levels of 300cd/m² in this location. Had the design of the signage been considered appropriate, the Council would have attached a compliance condition restricting the luminance levels to 300cd/m².

Conclusion

In consideration of the above, the amended drawing submitted 11/02/2026 omit significant details from the drawings. Notwithstanding this, from what can be ascertained of the scheme the proposed signage is considered to have an adverse effect on the listed asset's architectural and historic character, further detracting from the setting of the Upper King Street Conservation Area. The overall harm is considered to be less than substantial, and are at a level where the ancillary public benefits the signage would serve in facilitating the occupancy of the unit would not outweigh that harm. On this basis, the proposal is considered to fail the statutory test to preserve as required by Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

By virtue of the Brown Street projecting sign failing to meet headroom clearance requirements, it would pose a danger to public safety, particularly for pedestrians turning the corner from King Street to Brown Street. This sign is therefore contrary to the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007; Places for Everyone Policies JP-P1 and JP-C5; Core Strategy Policies SP1, CC5, T1 and DM1; and saved UDP Policies DC14.5 B.

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:

Refuse

Reasons for recommendation to refuse

Amenity – General Characteristics of the Locality

The 2no. internally illuminated projecting signs would by virtue of their design, materiality, siting, scale, massing and form constitute a low-quality form of external signage that would not be commensurate in quality to the listed status of the Grade II Atlas Chambers, unacceptably detracting from the listed building and having a detrimental impact on the Upper King Street Conservation Area. The acrylic faces and stainless-steel support structure would be of a poor material quality detracting from the impressive masonry and brass work of the building. The excessive depth of the sign would appear overly bulky, with the lollipop shape failing to correspond to the rectilinear and orthogonal architectural features of the building. The external vinyl referenced in the plans would moreover be to the detriment of the historic fabric of the listed building.

The proposed signage is therefore contrary to the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007; Section 66 and 72 of the Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act 1990; Places for Everyone Policies JP-Strat2, JP-P1 and JP-P2; Core Strategy Policies SP1, CC9, EN1, EN3, and DM1; saved UDP Policies DC14, DC18 and DC19; Sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework; as well as guidance contained within the Council's Shopfront and Signage Design Guide.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services
Environmental Health

Sixth Floor, Ship Canal House, 96 - 98 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WU
Fifth Floor, Ship Canal House, 96 - 98 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WU
Third Floor, 73 King Street, Manchester, M2 4NG
Second Floor, 73 King Street, Manchester, M2 4NG
Fourth Floor, 73 King Street, Manchester, M2 4NG
73 King Street, Manchester, M2 4NG
All Bar One Cafe Bar, 75 - 79 King Street, Manchester, M2 4NG
Seventh Floor, 73 King Street, Manchester, M2 4NG
Eighth Floor, 73 King Street, Manchester, M2 4NG
First To Fourth Floor, Ship Canal House, 96 - 98 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WU
LIVERPOOL VICTORIA FRIENDLY, Ninth Floor, Ship Canal House, 96 - 98 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WU
Fourth Floor, Ship Canal House, 96 - 98 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WU
Ninth Floor, 73 King Street, Manchester, M2 4NG
Hotel Gotham, 100 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WU
Tenth Floor, 73 King Street, Manchester, M2 4NG
ENTERPRISES VENTURES LIMITED, Sixth Floor, 73 King Street, Manchester, M2 4NG
Fifth Floor, 73 King Street, Manchester, M2 4NG
Basement And Ground Floor, 84 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WQ
Seventh Floor, Ship Canal House, 96 - 98 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WU
Flight Club, Ground Floor, Ship Canal House, 96 - 98 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WU
Eighth Floor, Ship Canal House, 96 - 98 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WU
86 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WQ
First Floor, 86 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WQ
SYMATRIX LTD, Second Floor, 86 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WQ
84 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WQ
JAMIE'S ITALIAN LIMITED, Ground Floor, 100 King Street, Manchester, M2 4WU

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
Coal Authority - Development Low Risk - Name: DEVELOPMENT_LOW_RISK_AREA
Conservation Area - Upper King Street Conservation Area 1970
Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL