Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no.	144198/AOH/2025
Date registered valid:	30 September 2025
Proposal:	Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens.
Address:	Outside No.15 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 5AE,
Ward(s):	Deansgate Ward
Applicant:	Ms Verity Cheyne BT Telecommunications PLC
Agent (if any):	Mr Oliver Taylor Dalcour Maclaren
Case officer:	Emily Booth Tel: 0161 234 4193 Email: emily.booth@manchester.gov.uk
Recommendation:	Refuse

Date of recommendation: 24 November 2025

Application details

Type of application: Advertisement Hoardings Consent

Development type: Advertisements

Date of site visit: 13 October 2025

Standard consultations:
Printed: 8 October 2025 Expired: 29 October 2025

Neighbour notifications
Printed: 8 October 2025 Expired: 29 October 2025

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

Description of Site

This application relates to the pavement on Oxford Street, adjacent 15 Oxford Court at 18,20 and 24-28 Oxford Street, which is a Grade II Listed Building that is currently used as offices. This section of pavement in front of the building at 15 Oxford Street is paved and accommodates a bin, 2 totems with digital advertising screens and a lamppost. There is a further advertising screen located on the opposite side of the road. There is also a bus stop outside the adjacent building approximately 35 metres away from the site.

15 Oxford Court was partly demolished with only the Oxford Street façade including chimneys remaining. It is also named Princes Buildings. The remaining facade dates from 1903. It is constructed of pale buff brick with matching terracotta ground floor treatment and dressings. It was built in the Art Nouveau style and was originally used as shops with offices above. The facade is dominated by an exuberant attic which has 5 bays of windows with semi-circular sunk parapets and 8 tall chimneys. Other features include giant 3-storey segmental arches, Lombard friezes and elaborate terracotta enrichment.

Description of area

The site is not within a Conservation Area but is adjacent the George Street and St Peters Square Conservation Areas. The St Peter's Square Conservation Area is only approximately 39 metres from the site. The George Street Conservation area is on the opposite side of the road.

Grade II* Listed Central Library is within the view at the end of Oxford Street as it meets St Peter's Square.

The surrounding area contains a large number of other listed buildings include the Grade II* Listed Churchgate House on Oxford Street, the Grade II Listed St James Buildings and Portland Buildings on Oxford Street. There are also non-designated heritage assets surrounding the site including Peter House on Oxford Street and 36-38 Oxford Street at the corner of Chepstow Street and Oxford Street.

The surrounding area contains a variety of uses including office, hotels, retail, bars, cafes, education and restaurants uses and the Town Hall Complex.

Oxford Street/Oxford Road is a highly trafficked route from South Manchester into the City Centre, is a particularly busy bus route that experiences extremely high footfall due to being between the universities, the train station and the City Centre.

St Peter's Square and its surroundings have received a high level of investment over recent years with a refurbishment of the Town Hall Complex Buildings, the redesign of St Peters Square and the construction of new office buildings, one of which has a large frontage on Oxford Street.

Site History

Application referenced 119885/FO/2018 was approved in 2018 and allowed the installation of 1no. 2.9m high InLink, following removal of 2no. KX100 telephone kiosks.

Application referenced 119886/AOH/2018 was approved in 2018 and allowed the installation of 2no. digital LED display screens to associated InLink

Related Applications

144066/FO/2025 - Installation of digital LED totem at Outside No. 71 Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2BS.
144067/AOH/2025 - Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens at Outside No. 71 Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2BS.

144106/FO/2025 - Installation of digital LED totem at Outside 51 Piccadilly Street, Manchester, M1 2AP.
144107/AOH/2025 - Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens at Outside 51 Piccadilly Street, Manchester, M1 2AP.

144108/FO/2025 - Installation of digital LED totem at Footpath Outside 1 Portland Street, Manchester, M1 4AJ.
144109/AOH/2025 - Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens at Footpath Outside 1 Portland Street, Manchester, M1 4AJ.

144110/FO/2025 - Installation of digital LED totem at Outside H&M Brown Street, Manchester, M2 1DA.
144211/AOH/2025 - Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens at Outside H&M Brown Street, Manchester, M2 1DA.

144112/FO/2025 - Installation of digital LED totem at Outside No.98 Portland Street, Manchester, M1 4GX.

144200/AOH/2025 - Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens at Outside No.98 Portland Street, Manchester, M1 4GX.

144114/FO/2025 - Installation of digital LED totem at Outside Deansgate Station, Whitworth Street West, Manchester, M1 5WY.
144115/AOH/2025 - Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens at Outside Deansgate Station, Whitworth Street West, Manchester, M1 5WY.

144116/FO/2025 - Installation of digital LED totem at Outside Primark, Mosley Street, Manchester, M60 1AY.
144117/AOH/2025 - Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens at Outside Primark, Mosley Street, Manchester, M60 1AY.

144118/FO/2025 - Installation of digital LED totem at Outside No. 8-10 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7EF.
144201/AOH/2025 - Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens at Outside No. 8-10 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7EF.

144120/FO/2025 - Installation of digital LED totem at Footpath Outside No. 11-13 Piccadilly, Manchester, M60 1AY.
144199/AOH/2025 - Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens at Footpath Outside No. 11-13 Piccadilly, Manchester, M60 1AY.

144122/FO/2025 - Installation of digital LED totem at Outside No.15 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 5AE.

144124/FO/2025 - Installation of digital LED totem at Opposite No. 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3BU.
144197/AOH/2025 - Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens at Opposite No. 60 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3BU.

144144/FO/2025 - Installation of digital LED totem at Outside No. 9 Stevenson Square, Manchester, M1 1DB.
144196/AOH/2025 - Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens at Outside No. 9 Stevenson Square, Manchester, M1 1DB.

144337/FO/2025 - Installation of digital LED totem at Portland Street, Outside Piccadilly Hotel, Manchester, M1 4AL.
144338/AOH/2025 - Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens at Portland Street, Outside Piccadilly Hotel, Manchester, M1 4AL.

144339/FO/2025 - Installation of digital LED totem at Outside No. 48 King Street, Manchester, M2 6AF.
144340/AOH/2025 - Installation of 2no internally illuminated digital display screens at Outside No. 48 King Street, Manchester, M2 6AF.

Description of Development

Advertisement consent is sought for the display of two 75" digital screens measuring 950cm x 1670mm on the front and rear of a digital LED totem.

Planning permission is sought for this totem as part of application referenced 144122/FO/2025.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Publicity - Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties.

One objection has been received, from a Local Ward Councillor, who stated that the advertisement totem is in a busy location, does not contribute to the Council's objective to reduce street clutter, reduces pavement space and sightlines and makes pedestrians feel more enclosed in locations where we should be prioritising pedestrians.

Highway Services - Advised that the proposal does not contribute to or align with Manchester City Council's ongoing de-cluttering strategy of the highway, fails to meet broader design standards and policies that promote inclusive access and safe, active travel, and have concerns that the increased footprint of the totem could impede pedestrian movement and inclusive accessibility and increase localised pedestrian congestion.

Environmental Health - Requested that if the application were to be approved, conditions should be attached to control the light from the digital display screens, the noise from speakers on the street hub, and for a maintenance management plan to be submitted.

Issues

The **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-P2 - Heritage
- Policy JP-C5 - Streets for All
- Policy JP-C6 - Walking and Cycling

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 CC9 - Design and Heritage
- Policy EN1 - Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas
- Policy EN3 - Heritage
- Policy DM1 - Development Management

Saved Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (1995) - The following saved UDP Policies are of relevance to this application:

- Policy DC15 - Advertisements, Hoardings and Posters
- Policy DC18 - Conservation Areas
- Policy DC19 – Listed Buildings

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024):

- Chapter 12 - Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Chapter 16 - Conserving the Historic Environment

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 66, and 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 require that special consideration is given to the preservation of the significant fabric and setting of listed buildings and conservation areas.

The National Design Guide (January 2021)

Illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring, and successful can be achieved in practice. It forms part of the Government's collection of planning practice guidance and should be read alongside the separate planning practice guidance on design process and tools.

Greater Manchester's Streets for All Design Guide (2023)

Adopted November 2023 to ensure will ensure that streets are welcoming, green and safe spaces for all people, enabling more travel by walking, cycling, and using public transport while creating thriving places that support local communities and businesses.

The **Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (Adopted 2007)**

This document provides guidance to help develop and enhance Manchester. In particular, the SPD seeks appropriate design, quality of public realm, facilities for disabled people (in accordance with Design for Access 2).

In Chapter 2 'Design', paragraph 2.7 outlines the City Council's expectations that all new developments should have a high standard of design making a positive contribution to the City's environment and encourages "the most appropriate form of development to enliven neighbourhoods and sustain local facilities.

The main issues for consideration relate to the principle of the proposal, as well as, in accordance with the advertisement regulations, the acceptability of the proposal in terms of its impact upon visual amenity and upon public safety. In judging this, the provisions of the development plan and any other relevant factors, so far as they are material, must be taken into account.

Visual Amenity

The proposal would see the replacement of the InLink model screens with those of the Street Hub 3 model.

The proposed LED screens would be larger at 75", measuring 950cm x 1670mm, as opposed to the screens on the existing InLink model, which are 69mm x 1210mm.

The existing InLink advertising screens are relatively restrained in scale, occupying less surface area of the totem's faces. By contrast, the Street Hub advertising screens are wider and taller, and would present a more prominent form of advertisement visible along the route.

It is acknowledged that adverts are intended to attract attention, however digital advertisement displays have a greater brightness than traditional advertisement and are by design highly visible in the street scene. The additional size and prominence of the advertising screens would increase distraction from the adjacent Grade II listed building described above and from the

view at the end of Oxford Street of the Grade II* listed Central Library and the St Peter's Square and George Street Conservation Areas.

In view of the above, it is not considered that the proposed Street Hub advertisements represent a like-for-like replacement within the street scene, having a more dominant and obtrusive visual presence than the existing InLink model and other advertisements within the setting, intensifying advertisement clutter which would detract from the appearance of the street scene.

In an appeal decision for application 142706/AOH/2025 (Appeal ref: APP/B4215/H/25/3369504) relating to the footpath outside 15 Oldham Road featuring high levels of advertisement and street clutter, the Inspector found that despite 'the largely commercial character of the area… [with] various signs and adverts on nearby buildings' the totem and advertisement's dominant and obtrusive presence would add further visual clutter and result in cumulative harm:

it would add further visual clutter, making this busy pedestrian route a less pleasing place to walk, and its siting close to the edge of the carriageway would only exacerbate its visual prominence and dominance at this busy junction.

In addition to this, the intensified level of advertisement would also detract from the setting of the Grade II listed former warehouse buildings on the opposite side of Portland Street and Dickenson Street.

In coming to this view, the Council takes note of recent appeal decisions for similar Street Hub 2 totems and advertising screens.

In an appeal decision for application 142696/AOH/2025 (Appeal ref: APP/B4215/H/25/3369448) in the Eastlands area of the City, though much less populated by advertisement and street clutter the Inspector found that the totem and advertisement's large digital advertisement panels would contribute to their dominant and obtrusive presence:

Due to a combination of its height, width and freestanding position close to the edge of the carriageway, the proposed hub, with its large digital advertisement panels on both sides, would represent a dominant and obtrusive feature on the pavement.

In an appeal decision for application 142706/AOH/2025 (Appeal ref: APP/B4215/H/25/3369504) relating to the footpath outside 15 Oldham Road, the Inspector found that despite 'the largely commercial character of the area… [with] various signs and adverts on nearby buildings' the totem and advertisement's dominant and obtrusive presence would add further visual clutter and result in cumulative harm:

it would add further visual clutter, making this busy pedestrian route a less pleasing place to walk, and its siting close to the edge of the carriageway would only exacerbate its visual prominence and dominance at this busy junction.

the addition of the rotating digital images on the proposed hub, in conjunction with the rotating images on this existing advert, would result in cumulative visual harm from digital advertisements within the immediate locality.

In the same appeal decision, the Inspector also found that the similar LED screens would harm the setting of the listed Former Midland Bank and features of architectural interest which contribute to its significance. the frequently changing digital advertisement images on the hub would compete with the visual prominence of this listed building on the street scene.

The accompanying decision for the totem structure itself engages this test within Paragraph 215 of the NPPF, which cannot be used when determining advertisement consent. Public benefits are not relevant to this proposal but will be taken in account when determining the related planning permission.

A recent appeal decided in Manchester City Council boundaries by the Planning Inspectorate for 142706/AOH/2025 (Appeal ref: APP/B4215/H/25/3369504), confirms that this is the appropriate approach.

Sections 66 and 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 require that special consideration is given to the preservation of the significant fabric and setting of listed buildings and conservation areas. For the reasons outlined above, it is not considered that the proposal preserves the setting of listed buildings or adjacent conservation areas.

In consideration of the above, and in the context of the surroundings of the current application whereby there are material differences between the circumstances of the InLink and Street Hub advertising screen applications, it is viewed that the proposal for the advertisement, due to the intensification of advertisement clutter, which would be visually detrimental to the street scene, within the setting of listed buildings and the George Street Conservation Area, and the future proposed regeneration of Piccadilly Gardens, would be contrary to the provisions of Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, policies JP-P2 and of the Places for Everyone Plan, policies SP1, CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012), saved policies DC15.1, DC15.2, DC18, DC19 and DC22 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995), sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990.

Public Safety

While contributing to the visual prominence of the adverts, the luminance of the digital screens is not considered to be at a level where there would be a harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties.

MCC’s Environmental Health team have reviewed the scheme are satisfied that as long as conditions were added to control the light from the digital display screens, the noise from speakers on the street hub, and for a maintenance management plan to be submitted, then any concerns regarding luminance of the digital screens, noise from the speakers, concerns over video or moving transitions, and problems that might arise from incorrect maintenance of the displays, would be mitigated.

As these elements could be mitigated via the way of conditions, concerns over any of these impacts are not significant enough to warrant a refusal on public safety grounds.

Highways comments note that the footway is already congested and the adverts forming part of the totem structure as a whole would exacerbate this congestion.

They note that congested areas on the pavement may result in pedestrians stepping out onto the adjacent live carriageway but have not objected to the scheme on safety grounds.

Highways have neither raised concerns about the obscurement of traffic signals or blocking of sightlines for pedestrians or drivers, but whilst they have highlighted many concerns do not object.

While the proposal's siting would form an obstacle on the footway and contributes to an impression of clutter, it is not considered that there is evidence of enough of a public safety impact for pedestrians in order to warrant a refusal on these grounds for this particular site.

Conclusion

Any public safety concerns of the proposed digital advertising displays are not significant enough to refuse on public safety grounds.

However, due to a combination of its height, width, materiality, and appearance, the proposed hub, with its large digital advertisement panels on both sides, would represent a dominant and obtrusive feature on the pavement that would add further advertisement clutter, making this busy pedestrian route a less pleasing place to walk, with its siting close to the edge of the carriageway would only exacerbate its visual prominence and dominance at this busy junction, within the setting of heritage assets.

Therefore, the proposed digital advertising displays are refused on visual amenity grounds, due to the proposal being contrary to the provisions of Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, policies JP-P1, JP-P2 and JP-C5 of the Places for Everyone Plan, policies SP1, CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012), saved policies DC15.1, DC15.2, DC18 and DC19 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995), sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990.

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 polices 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

1) This two-sided digital screen, by virtue of its siting, scale, design, appearance and means of illumination, would form an obtrusive, incongruous and overly dominant feature in the footway in a prominent and highly visible location in the City Centre to the detriment of the character and visual amenity of the local context and pedestrian experience. The sign would also increase visual clutter due to existing advertisements and street furniture in this location when seen together, by increasing the size and number of advertisements compared to the existing BT totem, and due to the consistent rotation of static images. This would further have an unduly harmful impact on the setting and significance of the Grade II listed buildings at 15 Oxford Court, 18-20 and 24-28 Oxford Street, the Grade II* Listed Central Library and the adjacent George Street and St Peters Square Conservation Areas. The proposed advertisements would therefore be contrary to the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007; Places for Everyone Policies JP-C5, JP-P1 and JP-P2; Core Strategy Policies SP1, CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1; saved UDP Policies DC15.1, DC15.2, DC18 and DC19; and Sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services
Environmental Health

Advertising Right JC DeCauxOutside 33 - 35, Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 4BH
34 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 5EL
Eden & Co Solicitors, 26 Oxford Court, Manchester, M2 3WQ
The Paramount, 33 - 35 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 4BH
Third Floor, 15 Oxford Court, Manchester, M2 3WQ
11 Oxford Court, Manchester, M2 3WQ
31 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 4BH
16 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 5AE
15 Oxford Court, Manchester, M2 3WQ

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
Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL