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Tel: 0161 413 6444
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Your Ref:
Our Ref: MAN.9152.001

Date: 28th April 2026

[redacted]

FAO:

Manchester City Council
Planning Department
Town Hall
Manchester
M2 5DB

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Advertising Consent Application at Smoker's Paradise, 53 Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2AP

We write on behalf of our client, Smoker's Paradise/Eurofones (the 'Applicant'), and enclose a retrospective application for advertisement consent for a location at 53 Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2AP. It is submitted after receiving a letter from the Enforcement Team (Appendix A) after the update of the existing signage. This statement accompanies the application for a replacement shopfront fascia sign to provide appropriate identification for a long-established retail unit within Manchester City Centre.

The application site occupies a ground-floor commercial unit within a continuous retail frontage on Piccadilly, a defined commercial corridor characterised by active shopfronts and associated signage.

Advertisement consent is sought for 1 fixed digital LED projecting advertisement sign for a period of 5 years. The signage will be located at the entrance to the retail unit of 53 Piccadilly, a primary A-road which runs approximately 250 metres at this location between Oldham Street and Portland Street. The site lies within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area, and 53 Piccadilly is a Grade II Listed Building (1246920; 1994), part of the Gardens Hotel and shops at 51-57 (odd) Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2AP.

Advertisement consent is required as the sign is:

- A fascia sign with illumination
- A projecting sign
- Larger than 0.3 sqm
- New signage and a material alteration to the existing signage

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Under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, as the sign incorporates illumination, it requires express advertisement consent, especially as Piccadilly is a sensitive, high-visibility location.

The application comprises this covering letter and the following documents, submitted via the planning portal (Ref: PP-):

- Application Forms (completed by Enzygo Ltd);
- Site Location Plan;
- Advertising Signage Plan including Site Location Plan (ref. MAN9152001-ENZ-XX-XX-DR-T-0001 Digital Advertising Sign Plan);
- Photographs – Historical (ref. MAN9152001-P001)
- Photographs – Current (ref. MAN9152001-P002)
- Advertising Signage Technical Detail (Ref. P3mm Outdoor LED Screen: MAN9152001-P003)

The Proposal

This application seeks planning consent for:

> *"The erection and display of 1.no digital LED advertisement sign above the entrance to Smoker's Paradise and Eurofones at 53 Piccadilly, Manchester, for a period of 5 years."*

Full details of the design and location of the signage are shown in the drawing pack, prepared by Enzygo Ltd and submitted in support of this planning application.

The proposal comprises a single item of shopfront signage located within the established fascia zone at ground-floor level. The sign has been designed to avoid obscuring architectural detailing and to remain visually subordinate to the host building.

All fixings are proposed to be:

- Minimal
- Fully reversible
- Installed without removal or permanent alteration of historic fabric

The display panel comprises an IP-rated LED panel with a screen size of 450cm x 140cm mounted on a metal hollow box with a width of 10cm, and the depth from the wall is 45cm, as demonstrated on the supporting Advertising Signage Mounting Detail drawing. The maximum brightness is 5000 cd/m2, although it is important to highlight that the brightness levels are fully controllable; the display can be programmed to reduce luminance after sunset and increase it after sunrise. A technical sheet of the screen is appended to this application.

The objective of the advertising content is to welcome passers-by into the shop passing through Piccadilly and to and from Piccadilly Station. The display panel features static signage, alternating between Smoker's Paradise and Eurofones, with each piece of content being displayed for approximately 20/30 seconds. All display material has been compliance-checked for flashing imagery and spatial patterns to ensure full adherence to Ofcom and relevant international safety standards.

The position and scale of the signage have been carefully considered to ensure that it integrates with the street scene, whilst being effectively positioned for advertising purposes. The sign will be viewed against a backdrop of the existing buildings, all of which have similar and sometimes larger signage and will not materially impose upon the street scene.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

The proposed development must be considered against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), revised in December 2024. In relation to advertisements, paragraph 141 requires advertisements to be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account cumulative impacts. Control over outdoor advertisements should be simple, efficient, and effective. It is highlighted that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.

The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 is particularly important, outlining local authorities' powers to resist any advertisements "in the interest of amenity and public safety".

The Development Plan

The relevant Development Plan Document for this application is the Core Strategy (2012), Places for Everyone (2024) and the Extant Unitary Development Plan Policies. The Development Plan, which forms a set of planning documents and maps setting out the strategic vision, policies and site allocations for development in Manchester.

At present, the Policies within the Local Plan specifically relevant to shopfronts and signage are policies contained within the Local Plan, in particular Core Strategy Policies CC9 - Design and Heritage, DM1 - Development Management, EN1 – Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas, EN3 – Heritage, SP1 - Spatial Principles, Places for Everyone Policies JP-S1 – Core Growth Area, JP-S2 – City Centre, JP-P1 – Sustainable Places, JP-P2 – Heritage, and Saved UDP Policies 14 - Shop fronts and related signs, 15 - Advertisements, hoardings and posters, 18 - Conservation Areas and 19 - Listed Buildings

Policy JP-P1 requires development, where appropriate, to conserve and enhance the historic environment, respect the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used, and be visually stimulating and high-quality in design, including the use of durable, robust materials that weather well and are easily maintained. Policy JP-P2 requires the positive management of heritage, and particular consideration to be given to the protection of the significance of key elements of the historic environment which contribute to Greater Manchester's distinctive identity and sense of place.

Manchester operates a Shopfront and Signage Design Guide (SSDG), formally adopted in 2024 and used as a material planning consideration in all advertisement decisions citywide[1].

Key Considerations

The applicant's business plan aims to continually improve its premises to a high modern standard commensurate with the changing needs of the public. The signage provides an attractive, effective, and high-quality display that aligns with the modern branding of the business.

The proposed single-sided sign is intended to be located on the space previously occupied by the Eurofone sign that had been in situ for over twenty years. The materials, design and illumination are of a high-quality black iron and will be regularly cleaned and maintained, ensuring it will not adversely affect the local character or general street scene.

Heritage Impact

The scale, luminance, and display characteristics of the digital sign have been deliberately restrained to ensure it remains visually subservient to the host building.

The proposal has been carefully designed to respect the proportions of the original shopfront and avoid extending above the traditional fascia zone. In visual terms, the sign does not compete with or dominate architectural features and is read clearly as a modest contemporary addition, capable of removal without lasting harm and represents minimal visual intrusion within the historic façade, replacing the signage of an equivalent size that had been in place for over twenty years.

The illumination associated with the signage is fully controllable to avoid excessive brightness, particularly during evening hours. The proposal does not obscure, replace, or compete with architectural features and is a lightweight, modern addition that is capable of removal without harm.

[1] [manchester.gov.uk]

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Amenity and Public Safety

The signage is set within the context of a busy commercial area comprising similar premises and is set back from the public highway (Piccadilly) by a significant pavement planted with established trees and, as such, will not adversely harm amenity or highway safety. The level of illumination is fully controllable and will have a negligible impact on road users.

The signage provides clear identification of an active ground-floor commercial unit, supporting the ongoing viable use of the building and contributing to the vitality of the city centre retail environment. The sign would operate at controlled luminance levels, without animation, flashing, or frequent image change, thereby avoiding distraction to motorists or pedestrians and respecting the amenity of the area

Conclusions

Overall, it is considered that the proposed signage is appropriate at this location is in keeping with the character and appearance of the existing area and street scene and will cause no adverse effects on the amenity of the area. The proposal will have no impact on highway safety, and is in full accordance with the NPPF para 141 and with UDP Policies 14, 15, 18, 19 and the Shopfront and Signage Design Guide

The covering letter and associated supporting plans show that the proposed signage is in accordance with national and local policy. We trust that the above information, as well as the separately submitted plans and documents, provides you with sufficient information to process and grant planning permission for advertisement consent at Smoker's Paradise for a period of 5 years. We look forward to receiving confirmation that the application has been validated.

Should you need anything further or have any queries regarding the application, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

Murray Graham, BSc Joint (Hons), MA, DipTRP, MRTPI, FRSA

Associate Director

[redacted]

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APPENDIX A – ENFORCEMENT LETTER FROM MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL

Julie Roscoe
Director of Planning, Building
Control and Licensing

Floor 6, Town Hall Extension
Albert Square, PO Box 532
Manchester, M60 2LA

Mr Mubarak Bax
[redacted]

Contact: Adam Roche
Tel: 0161 234 4688
Email: adam.roche@manchester.gov.uk

11 February 2026

Our reference: ENF/16184/26

Dear Sir/Madam,

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED) AND TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (CONTROL OF ADVERTISEMENTS) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2007 (AS AMENDED)
DISPLAY OF ADVERTISMENTS AT 53 PICCADILLY, MANCHESTER, M1 2AP

An enquiry has been received regarding the display of advertisements relating to Smokers Paradise at 53 Piccadilly.

I can advise you that the City Council has not granted any consent for the aforementioned advertisements, nor they do they benefit from any of the classes of deemed consent set out in Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) and are therefore unauthorised.

The display of an advertisement without the necessary consent is an outright offence and Section 224(4) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, states that a person shall be deemed to display an advertisement if he is the owner or occupier of the land on which the advertisement is displayed or the advertisement gives publicity to his goods, trade, business or other concerns.

Continuing display of the advertisement is a criminal offence pursuant to Section 224(3) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and you may be liable on summary conviction in the Magistrates Court to a maximum fine of £2,500 for each sign, for every day the sign remains on display i.e. £17,500 per sign, per week, and up to £250 for each day during which the offence continues after conviction.

There are statutory defences contained within the legislation, specifically that the advertisement was displayed without your knowledge or that you took all reasonable steps to prevent the unauthorised display or after the advertisement had been displayed, to secure its removal. As you are aware of the existence of the advertisement a defence in the first instance is unlikely, therefore it remains your responsibility to secure its removal.

In order to resolve the matter without the need for formal action by way of prosecution, the following steps need to be taken:

1. Remove in their entirety the fascia signs affixed to the elevations fronting onto Piccadilly, as highlighted in yellow on the attached photograph (ENF/01).

2. Remove the vinyl advertisement, as highlighted in red on the attached photograph (ENF/01).

3. Return the elevation to its condition prior to the breach taking place and remove all debris/rubble that may have been caused as a result of carrying out the above steps.

For your information, should the Council secure a successful prosecution, an application for costs will be made in respect of taking the matter to Court; this in addition to any fine handed down by the Court.

It remains in your interests to remove the unauthorised advertisements, together with their fixings, this of course can be considered in mitigation, but it does not remove the offences already committed and is without prejudice to any further criminal liability on sites not listed above if appropriate steps are not taken.

My development compliance officer, Adam Roche, will visit the site after a period of 28 days, following which I would expect the unauthorised advertisements to have been removed. If the advertisements remain on display after the expiration of this period, the next communication you will receive in this regard will be a summons to appear in the Magistrates Court.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

ENF/01

