RESPONSE TO CASE OFFICER'S INITIAL COMMENTS

Proposed Permanent Canopy and Electric Roller Shutters

477 Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, M21 8AG

Planning Application Ref.	PLA-2026-000892
Applicant	Mr Waqas Khawaja
Site Address	477 Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, M21 8AG
Local Planning Authority	Manchester City Council
Case Officer	Joshua Lee
Date	09 August 2026

Introduction

The Applicant welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Case Officer's initial observations prior to determination. The Council has indicated that it does not object in principle to weather protection, with concerns focused on the design and appearance of the proposed permanent canopy and integrated roller shutters. Whilst the Applicant accepts that the architectural detailing may be capable of refinement, it is respectfully submitted that the principle of a permanent canopy is operationally necessary and can be accommodated without unacceptable harm to the surrounding streetscape.

Operational Requirements

The proposed grocery store relies upon the external display of fresh fruit and vegetables throughout normal trading hours. External displays are a recognised feature of independent grocery businesses and contribute positively to the vitality and attractiveness of district centres. The proposed canopy is therefore an operational necessity rather than simply an architectural addition.

Weather Protection

A retractable awning would not provide the level of weather protection required for a business operating seven days per week between 8:00am and 8:00pm throughout the year (excluding Christmas Day). Fresh produce requires continuous protection from rainfall, wind and adverse weather. A retractable solution would reduce the usability of the external display area and undermine the viability of the business.

Daily Handling of Produce

A retractable structure would require all externally displayed produce to be removed each evening and reinstated each morning. This is estimated to require approximately four hours of labour per day, increasing staffing costs, manual handling, food waste and damage to delicate fruit and vegetables through repeated movement.

Active Frontage

The integrated roller shutters are proposed solely for security outside trading hours. During normal opening hours they will remain fully open and concealed within the canopy structure, ensuring an active frontage with visible produce displays.

Character of the Area

Permanent canopy structures are already an established feature of this section of Barlow Moor Road, including directly opposite the application site. Some nearby premises also incorporate permanent security shutters. These examples demonstrate that permanent canopies are not unfamiliar within the immediate streetscape. Further photographic evidence of comparable structures within the immediate vicinity is provided at Appendix A.

Previous Planning Decisions

The Applicant previously obtained planning permission for a comparable permanent canopy at 63–65 Manchester Road, Chorlton. Nearby commercial premises have also benefited from planning permissions involving external canopy structures. Whilst each application must be considered on its own merits, these are material considerations.

Willingness to Amend the Design

The Applicant is willing to consider the following amendments to the scheme whilst retaining the operational benefits of weather protection for the external produce display:

- Slimmer supporting columns and reduced overall bulk
- Reduced fascia depth
- Powder-coated finishes in a colour to be agreed with the Council
- Concealed or recessed shutter housings
- Refined roof detailing
- Other architectural improvements to be agreed through further discussion

Conclusion

The Applicant respectfully requests that the Local Planning Authority continue discussions regarding design refinements rather than refusing the application. The operational need for a permanent canopy, the existing character of the area and the willingness to improve the design support a collaborative approach.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Waqas Khawaja
Applicant

APPENDIX A

Additional Photographic Evidence of Comparable Canopy Structures, Barlow Moor Road



Figure A1 – Permanent canopy with open external produce display, Barlow Moor Road



Figure A2 – Retail parade with established canopy and awning frontages, Barlow Moor Road



Figure A3 – Permanent covered veranda/canopy structure, Barlow Moor Road