HERITAGE STATEMENT AND DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

APPLICANT: Blow Up Media UK Ltd

APPLICATION SITE: 56-58, Oldham Street, Manchester M4 1LE

INTRODUCTION

The derelict site frontage at the application site has been utilised for a mural for the past few years to offset the harmful visual image of the metal corrugated sheeting above the shop line. This is shown below.



The proposal is for consent to upgrade the frontage by facading the metal cladding with timber framework to facilitate a mural display combining art with advertising. This will add visual interest and temporary investment into the building pending its permanent investment and re-use or development.

THE SITE AND SURROUNDS

The application site is positioned on the eastern side of Oldham Street, a busy shopping

street in central Manchester. The 3-storey building is part of a terraced row of shops of varying styles. The street is busy and vibrant. The location is part of the Stevenso Square conservation area.

The frontage is in a run- down condition and derelict aside from the CHASE musical store. Most of the façade above the shop front is boarded over with corrugated metal sheeting. The lower portion is covered in graffiti and the upper part above fascia level has a mural displayed across the sheeting.

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is illustrated on the drawings attached and seeks to upgrade the current mural display and introduce some advertising element combined with artistic displays.
The style of the displays would be devoid of any technical or digital effects, entirely static and would be a low tech traditional form of advertising.

The area covered by the existing display would be slightly reduced to 12 m wide x 4.2 metres high.

The display would have a parallel alignment to the roadway and thus not have a long range of view but more an incidental feature in this vibrant street scene.

The images portrayed would change over time as demand necessitates.

These would be entirely static images with no moving parts.

Illumination would be by way of 4 overhead lights. Illumination is an optional feature which can be set on a timer to be switched off during the quieter hours or prohibited entirely if considered necessary, both by a condition of any consent

Photographic image of existing metal facade



Photographic image of typical proposed display



NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

National guidance on advertising is contained within the following documents,

- The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.
- National Planning Practice Guidance
- The National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Practice Guidance advises that the display of advertisements is subject to a separate consent process within the planning system which is principally set out in the ***Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007*** (The Regulations), confirming as follows,

'Adverts are controlled with reference to their effect on amenity and public safety only, so the regime is lighter touch than the system for obtaining planning permission.'

The Regulations require *'Powers to be exercised in the interests of amenity and public safety',* taking into account the development plan so far as material and any other relevant factors.

Accordingly, development plan policies of the council cannot be decisive.

The ***National Planning Policy Framework*** **(NPPF)** confirms this approach to advert control decision advising that applications should be determined in relation to amenity (and where relevant public safety) issues only.

In relation to factors relevant to amenity, The Regulations states that,

"Factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any features of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest."

Planning Practice Guidance, on amenity, states that,

"*In practice, 'amenity' is usually understood to mean the effect on visual amenity in the immediate neighbourhood of an advertisement or site for the display of advertisements, where residents or passers-by will be aware of the advertisement. So, in assessing amenity, the local planning authority would always consider the local characteristics of the neighbourhood: for example, if the locality where the advertisement is to be displayed has important scenic, historic, architectural or cultural features, the local planning authority would consider whether it is in scale and in keeping with these features."*

ASSESSMENT

The main issue relates to visual amenity.

Heritage statement: Conservation and heritage issues

The building on the site is not listed either nationally or locally.

However, the location is within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area.

As the site is located within a conservation area there is a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any land or buildings in a conservation area (section 72(1) of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

Moreover, the 2007 Advertisement Regulations explains that factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality including the presence of any features of historic, architectural, cultural or other interest.

In this case the location is within the Stevenson Square Conservation Area which is described as a vibrant cultural hub located on the north-east edge of Manchester City centre within the famous Northern Quarter.

The building is not listed and has no historical significance and is currently disfigured at upper level by an expanse of corrugated tin sheeting stretched across its facade. It currently creates a negative void without value in the street scene

This has been the position for a number of years.

In more recent times a mural has been positioned to cover this area and deflect from the disfigurement of this feature.

The proposal is an extension of this situation offering a managed concealment of the visual eyesore of the metal cladding and adding colour and visual interest to the street scene.

Compared to the fallback position the proposal is considered to comprise an enhancement to the appearance of the conservation area without creating any visual harm.

The proposal is also considered to enhance the character of the conservation area which derives from the above description as a vibrant cultural hub within the famous Northern Quarter.

Whilst there are listed buildings in the vicinity at nos 66 and 103 Oldham Street these are not considered to be directly impacted by the proposal.

Amenity

The proposal would be an innovative and contextual temporary feature within this vibrant shopping street and represent a more welcoming addition to passers-by and all users than the alternative fallback option of uninteresting corrugated sheeting.

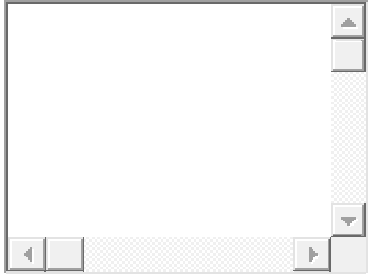
The location has been used for a number of years for a mural whilst retaining the metal cladding background. The premises are located on the east side of Oldham Street, in the heart of the City Centre's vibrant Northern Quarter District, the city's main creative district with numerous design, IT, media and marketing companies all located close by. The property is also close to the city's prime commercial and retail quarters.

The Northern Quarter is popular today for its numerous bars and cafes, as well as a mix of music and clothes shops. Amongst these is Affleck's Palace; a former department store which has been turned into a multi-storey bazaar for alternative clothing and knick-knacks.

Meanwhile, the area is something of a mecca for DJs, with shops such as Piccadilly Records, Vinyl Exchange, Vox Pop Records, Beatin' Rhythm, Vinyl Resting Place, Eastern Bloc Records (formerly owned by Martin Price of 808 State, then by Pete Waterman) and, until 2009, Fat City Records (formerly run by Mark Rae).

Night life in the Northern Quarter includes music venues. The area is also famous for its bar scene.

The area is also known as a home to the creative industries, and in particular fashion design, with various designers, agencies, and clothing wholesalers populating its back streets. There are also a number of commercial art galleries in the area and street art is on prominent display.



In relation to amenity, the 2007 Advertisement Regulations states that factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any features of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest.

Planning Practice Guidance, on amenity, confirms this approach by saying "*In practice, 'amenity' is usually understood to mean the effect on visual amenity in the immediate neighbourhood of an advertisement or site for the display of advertisements, where residents or passers-by will be aware of the advertisement. So, in assessing amenity, the local planning authority would always consider the local characteristics of the neighbourhood: for example, if the locality where the advertisement is to be displayed has important scenic, historic, architectural or cultural features, the local planning authority would consider whether it is in scale and in keeping with these features."*

In this case, the proposal is for an innovative feature adding visual interest and some investment into the appearance of this building pending its future use or development.

This would result in a more welcoming feature in the streetscene than the the exiting view and be in context with this vibrant location.