

HERITAGE STATEMENT

LPA REF: **23/01191/ADV**

ADDRESS: **PAVEMENT ADJ MANCHESTER ROAD, ROCHDALE OL11 3EE**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement accompanies the application for Advertisement Consent to relocate a Community Information Panel with internally illuminated double-sided paper advertisement on the pavement adjacent to Manchester Road, Rochdale as illustrated within the submission documents.
- 1.2 The site falls within a designated Conservation Area, identified as the Castleton (South) Conservation Area, and is near identified non-designated heritage assets. Therefore, this statement has been prepared to consider the impact of the proposed change on the character and appearance of the location within the Conservation Area, and to undertake an assessment of the likely effect of the development on the historic and architectural aspects of the surroundings
- 1.3 It is the view of the applicant that the proposed relocation of an existing Community Information Panel will result in either a negligible or a positive effect and would consequently not harm the heritage or amenity interests within the area.

2.0 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 2.1 Section 66 of the Act establishes a general duty for a planning authority, in considering whether to grant consent for a development which affects a listed building, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historical interest which it possesses. A building is listed by virtue of its special architectural or historical interest (Section 1(1)).
- 2.2 Section 72 of the Act establishes a duty in the exercise of any function under the Act to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. A conservation area is an area of local interest designated principally by the Local Planning Authority.

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

- 2.3 Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) deals with the consideration of cultural heritage assets and sets out the importance of being able to assess the impact of a development on the significance of heritage assets. Significance is defined in Annex 2 as the value of an asset because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic and can extend to its setting. The setting of a heritage asset is defined in Annex 2 as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. A designated heritage asset is recognised by the NPPF to be a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

- 2.4 The NPPF recognises that a balance needs to be struck between the preservation of the significance of a heritage asset and delivering public benefit. With regard to designated assets, paragraph 205 states that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be on its conservation. Distinction is drawn between those assets of highest significance and those of a lesser significance.
- 2.5 The NPPF identifies harm as being either substantial or less than substantial. Paragraph 206 states that where the proposal would lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset consent should be refused unless the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefit that outweighs that harm. In cases where less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset is anticipated, paragraph 208 requires that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In respect of non-designated assets, paragraph 209 requires a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.
- 2.6 In accordance with the NPPF, this Heritage Statement sets out the significance of heritage assets likely to be affected by the proposed works. The information provided in this assessment conforms to paragraph 200 of the NPPF, thus the level of detail provided is proportionate to the significance of the affected heritage assets and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on that significance.

Guidance on the application of heritage policy within the NPPF is provided within the PPS 5 Planning Practice Guide (English Heritage, 2010) and the on-line National Policy and Guidance

GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment

- 2.7 This document provides advice on how decision-taking in the historic environment should be undertaken, emphasising that the importance of

identifying, and understanding the significance of, any affected heritage asset and the contribution of their settings towards their significance. In line with the NPPF and the PPG, the document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged. The advice suggests a structured, staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information as follows:

1. Understand the significance of the affected assets;
2. Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
3. Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
4. Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
5. Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change;
6. Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing other aspects through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets that are affected.

2.8 The advice reiterates that heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. The document sets out the recommended steps for assessing significance and the impact of development proposals upon it, including examining the asset and its setting and analysing local policies and information sources. In assessing the impact of a development proposal on the significance of a heritage asset the document emphasises that the cumulative impact of incremental small-scale changes may have as great an effect on the significance of a heritage asset as a larger scale change. Crucially, the nature and importance of the significance that is affected will dictate the proportionate

response to assessing that change, its justification, mitigation and any recording which may be necessary.

GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets

- 2.9 This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. This document is an update to guidance previously published by English Heritage (The Setting of Heritage Assets 2011) in order to ensure that it is fully NPPF compliant, and is intended to assist historic environment practitioners in approaching and implementing national policy and guidance. The guidance is, to a great extent, a continuation of the approach advocated by the 2011 document, and there is now a clear continuation in the way in which setting is identified, and its assessment is intended to be approached, across the NPPF, PPG and Historic England's own guidance.
- 2.10 Setting is defined, as in the NPPF, as 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve'. Setting is also described as being a separate term to curtilage, character and context. The guidance emphasises that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation and that its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset. It also states that elements of setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of the heritage asset.
- 2.11 While setting is considered to be largely experienced in visual terms (with views being considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of an asset), setting can also be heavily impacted upon by other environmental factors including noise, vibration and odour. Further, setting may also incorporate perceptual and

associational attributes (including designed or incidental historic relationships) pertaining to the asset's surroundings.

2.12 This document thus provides guidance on practical and proportionate decision making with regards to the management of proposed development and the setting of heritage assets. It is stated that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change, and that settings may change without the generation of harm to significance; changes within the setting of a heritage asset may have positive, negative or neutral effects. It is stated that the contribution made to the significance of heritage assets by their settings will vary depending on the nature of the heritage asset and its setting and that different heritage assets may have different abilities to accommodate change within their settings without harming the significance of the asset and therefore setting should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Although not prescriptive in setting out how this assessment should be carried out, noting that any approach should be demonstrably compliant with legislation, national policies and objectives, English Heritage recommend using the '5-step process' in order to assess the potential effects of a proposed development on the setting and significance of a heritage asset.

2.13 This process has been continued from the 2011 guidance and is as follows:

1. Identification of heritage assets which are likely to be affected by proposals.
2. Assessment of whether and what contribution the setting makes to the significance of a heritage asset.
3. Assessing the effects of proposed development on the setting of a heritage asset.

4. Maximising enhancement and reduction of harm on the setting of heritage assets.

5. The final decision about the acceptability of proposals.

3.0 PROPOSAL

3.1 The proposal is for the relocation of a Community Information Panel with internally illuminated double-sided paper advertisement to a pavement space along Manchester Road, near the junction with Railway Brow. The development represents a proposal which seeks relocating an existing Community Information Panel that will enable the construction of a cycle lane on the north side of Manchester Road as part of Rochdale and Transport for Greater Manchester's Castleton Local Centre Corridor Cycleway Scheme. This has been instructed by the Council developments. This proposal therefore represents the express intention to cooperate with the Council and maintain the quality of street furniture within Rochdale.

3.2 JCDecaux UK is committed to the highest level of attention to detail during installation, including pavement reinstatement. The existing paving is carefully removed and cut to accommodate the unit plate fixings. Where possible, the existing paving is reused to present a seamless transition to the highest quality of build standards.

4.0 DESIGN AND HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 It is considered that the proposed relocation will not have a detriment effect on the appearance of the locality within which it will be positioned within the Castleton South Conservation Area.

- 4.2 The Conservation Area, designated in 2007 and extended in 2012, reflects the area's historical industrial development during the 19th century, notably influenced by the arrival of the Manchester & Leeds Railway in 1839. The Castleton Conservation Area encompasses the heart of Castleton, located 1.2 miles southwest of Rochdale and 8 miles northwest of Manchester, situated at the junction of the railway network connecting Manchester to Leeds and the Rochdale Canal. The Castleton township can be separated into three distinct character zones comprising residential, retail, and industrial focused areas.
- 4.3 Its linear development pattern, following Manchester Road, is influenced by its historical role as a significant transportation hub, with the railway station and canal serving as focal points for the town's architectural development. The conservation area features grid-plan residential streets characterised by red brick late Victorian and Edwardian terraces, continuous façade lines, and views of the surrounding countryside and canal. At present, the majority of the conservation area retains its integrity, with most buildings still reflecting its historical character. It is noted within the CA Character Appraisal persistent issues of vacancy and gradual alterations pose significant threats to its preservation.
- 4.4 The application site is located at the northern end of the Conservation Area, fronting Manchester road adjacent to the junction with Rail Brow and the Rochdale Canal. There are a number of non-designated heritage assets that have been identified nearby to the application site namely, the Blue Pitts Inn 15m north and the Bridge Bank House 50m south. The surrounding buildings are mixed in style with the defining character being that of a smaller high street. The prominent character within the locality is commercial, as a result of the numerous retail outlets at ground floor level. Manchester Road features modern furniture, as one would expect in such a town centre location, which includes benches, bins, lamp columns and other communication apparatus and cabinets.

- 4.5 The immediate setting for the proposed relocation is not one of the most sensitive parts of the conservation area, despite the presence of the non-designated assets, and is considered unlikely to impact the identified vistas along the Rochdale Canal North and South due to its positioning away from the bridge crossing. In support of this view, I would refer to another consent for the same form of advertisement opposite 848 Manchester Road (LPA Ref: 99/A4885). Overall, the proposed Community Information Panel relocation is unlikely to result in harm to the visual amenity of the designated centre or present an obstruction to pedestrian movements.
- 4.6 The primary consideration and purpose of this report is to examine the current quality and character of the heritage asset and consider how the proposed development would impact upon the historical and architectural special features of a particular building or area and whether this would be detrimental to its amenity. The starting point for this location is the identification of the current position of the Community Information Panel within Rochdale. It is therefore important to recognise that the removal of one structure and its relocation is in itself capable of being a positive measure that will see visual and environmental benefits associated with the relocation of an in-situ unit.
- 4.7 In recent years and in response to the increasing demands to improve the quality and design of street furniture in main centres across the UK. Whilst such units do not necessarily undermine nor distract from the historic integrity of an area of a particular building, they do represent a modern intervention into a historical, albeit busy and commercial thoroughfare.
- 4.8 The existing Community Information Panel has been in situ for many years being granted approval in April 1999 (LPA Ref: 99/A4885), becoming an established element on the streetscape. Due to the longevity of the Community Information

Panel, which was appraised at the time in respect of the effect it has on visual amenity and public safety, it was deemed to be acceptable in both respects. Nothing of significance has changed in the intervening years to suggest that the proposed relocation site, which is of a similar character to the existing position 100m south on Manchester Road, is now unacceptable as a location for a Community Information Panel with internally illuminated double-sided paper advertisement. The primary question therefore in respect of this application is whether the change from the current Community Information Panel to the proposed new site is likely to have an adverse impact of amenity or the character and appearance of the area. It is the applicant's view that they will not.

- 4.9 When comparing the existing with the proposed, it is clear that the effect on the significance of the heritage asset is likely to be negligible. It is not considered that the change of site would represent an over-bearing impact on this location, especially considering that the size of the structure would remain the same as previously approved.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The application seeks the relocation of a Community Information Panel with internally illuminated double-sided paper advertisement to a pavement space along Manchester Road, near the junction with Railway Brow at the request of the Council. The unit will be in a similar setting and of the same dimensions as the existing Community Information Panel along Manchester Road. As such, the applicant deems that the proposed development will have no discernible negative impact on any heritage asset.