

Application Number/s: 133186/AO/2022

Applicant: UNITE

Agent: Ashleigh Signs

Location: New Medlock House, Chester Street, Manchester

Proposal: Display of 2.no Halo-Illuminated Signs, Display of 1.no Sign above entrance

Ward: Deansgate

Description of Site and Surrounding Area

The application relates to New Medlock House, a purpose-built student accommodation building.

Building

The building was constructed in approximately 2001 and is 8 storeys in height. The building is built in a way that makes it appear as two separate buildings. However, they are adjoined at ground floor level. There is a central courtyard between the two building masses, which provides vehicle parking.

Surrounding Area (including Conservation Area)

The application building is adjacent to the A57(M) (Mancunian Way), which travels in a east-west direction to the south of the building. There is other purpose-built student accommodation to the west and the First Street Regeneration Zone is to the north. The land immediately to the north is currently a surface level car park. Cambridge Street is adjacent to the development building to the east.

Description of Proposal

The application seeks permission for:

- 2.no Fascia signs with a height of 10 metres, width of 1.4 metres and depth of 0.1 metres. The minimum height above ground is 8 metres. The letters will have a maximum height of 0.8 metres. The signs are to be built up of aluminium letters with acrylic back with building up aluminium line. The signage will spell out 'UNITE STUDENTS' in white lettering underlined in yellow. The signage will be internally lit with a maximum brightness of 350cd/m². The proposed signs are to the east and west elevations.

The Planning Submission

The application is supported by the following information:

- Existing and Proposed Plans

Publicity LBC

Site Notice/s Posted and Dates: No site notice was posted

Press Adverts Published and Dates: No advertisement was published

Neighbour Notification: No neighbours were consulted

Representations Received: None

Consultations

Highways

Comment received – no objection.

Policy

Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007

The LPA shall exercise its powers under these Regulations in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account:

(a) The provision of the development plan, so far as they are material; and

(b) Any other relevant factors

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of Paragraph 1(b) –

(a) factors relevant to the amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest;

(b) factors relevant to public safety include –

(i) the safety of persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military)

(ii) whether the display of the advertisement in question is likely to obscure or hinder the ready interpretation of any traffic sign, railway signal or aid navigation by water or air;

(iii) whether the display of the advertisement in question is likely to hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle

(3) In taking account of factors relevant to amenity, the LPA may, if it thinks fit, disregard any advertisement that is being displayed

(4) Unless it appears to the LPA to be required in the interests of amenity or public safety, an express consent for the display of advertisements shall not contain any limitation or restriction relating to the subject matter, content or design of what is to be displayed

Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012)

The Core Strategy contains no specific policies that relate to Advertising Consent.

Manchester Unitary Development Plan (1995) (Saved Policies)

15 – Advertisements, Hoardings and Posters – States that advertisements only be considered in the interests of amenity and public safety. In assessing the interests of amenity and safety, the Council will take account of the following criteria:

- Developments of this kind should not harm the character of architectural features of a building, nor interfere with its proper use.
- They should be in scale with the locality and relate properly to the site on which they stand;
- They should be unobtrusive and should not intrude into residential neighbourhoods and areas of high amenity value
- A proposal which would be injurious to public safety or adversely affect the flow of traffic, by reason of its position, size or design will not be permitted.

Upon having regard to the preceding policies, the LPA considers the proposed development to be acceptable in principle, conditions may be imposed in order to protect safety and amenity.

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

Section 16 – Achieving well-designed places – The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

Paragraph 136 states that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

National Planning Practice Guidance

Advertisements – Advertisements 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 for development.

All advertisements are subject to the ‘standard conditions’ set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulations, as follows:

1. No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site on which they are displayed (this includes the highway authority, if the sign is to be placed on highway land);
2. No advertisement is to be displayed which would obscure, or hinder the interpretation of, official road, rail, waterway or aircraft signs, or otherwise make hazardous the use of these types of transport;
3. Any advertisement must be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site;
4. Any advertisement hoarding or structure is to be kept in a condition which does not endanger the public; and

5. If an advertisement is required to be removed, the site must be left in a condition that does not endanger the public or impair visual amenity.

Even if express consent is not required, all advertisements must comply with any other relevant statutory provisions. For example, listed building consent may be required.

Light Pollution – Common causes of complaints to LPAs can include illuminated advertising. These installations may require particular attention.

Issues

Amenity

The proposed signage is not in an area of special historical interest nor a designated conservation area. It is not expected that the static illuminated advertising would cause undue impact to the character or appearance of the area. The advertisement would not emit any sound, so aural amenity is not relevant in this instance.

Highway Safety

All advertisements are intended to attract attention. It is acknowledged that the signage would be readily visible from the Mancunian Way, a motorway-grade highway to the south of the application building to which the signage is to be attached. Due consideration has been made to the appearance of the advertisement, as well as the brightness and method of illumination. It is not expected that drivers using the Mancunian Way or Cambridge Street would confuse the signage for anything relating to highway signage etc. In addition, it is not expected that the brightness, scale or contents of the signage would unduly distract drivers away from the highway.

In this instance, the signage is intended to identify the building and indicate the building's owner/operator. The signage is illuminated in a static manner. As such, the signage is considered acceptable and not likely to cause confusion or distraction to drivers.

Conclusion

Advertising consent should be given in this instance.

Recommendation:

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions.

1. No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.

No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to:

(a) endanger persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);

(b) obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air; or

(c) hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.

Any advertisement displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site.

Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a condition that does not endanger the public.

Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the site shall be left in a condition that does not endanger the public or impair visual amenity.

2. The maximum luminance level of the advertisements displayed on the panel shall not exceed 300 cd/m² during non daylight hours / inclement weather and 600cd/m² during daylight hours / clear weather

Reason - In the interest of highway safety pursuant to policy SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012).

3. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents:

Drawings/photographs stamped as received by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority, on the 11 March 2022

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. Pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.