

29 July 2021

Planning Department
Manchester City Council
PO Box 532
Town Hall
Manchester M60 2LA

F.A.O. Jennifer Connor

Dear Jennifer,

Application for Advertisement Consent for an Entrance Sign, Traffic Directional Sign and Gateway Totem Sign at Base, Manchester Science Park, Manchester M15 6LR

Please find enclosed an Application submitted under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) (hereafter referred to as the 'Advertising Regulations') by the Applicant, Bruntwood SciTech Limited.

The Application is for Advertisement Consent to erect three types of advertisement at the Base building at Manchester Science Park (MSP), located at Greenheys Lane, Manchester, M15 6LR and within the Manchester Oxford Road Corridor (hereafter referred to as 'the Site').

Background

Full Planning Permission was granted on 23 January 2020 for the development of a new five storey office building at the former Hillel House site at Greenheys Lane, MSP, Manchester M15 6LR hereafter referred to as 'the Site') under Planning Permission ref.: 125018/FO/2019. The description of development is as follows:

"Erection of a five storey building comprising offices (Use Class B1) and ancillary workshop and maker space, together with associated disabled car and cycle parking, landscaping, provision of plant and servicing and related access and highways works, and other associated works."

Construction of the new building commenced in summer 2020, and much of the superstructure has now been erected. Completion of construction is targeted for Q1 2023.

The development is underpinned by the MSP Masterplan and Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF), which was originally endorsed by Manchester City Council's Executive Committee in September 2014. The updated MSP Masterplan and SRF was endorsed by the Council in September 2019. The Masterplan and SRF seek to guide the future expansion and intensification of the campus as a strategic employment area in the Oxford Road Corridor.

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An important component of the SRF is to create a genuine sense of distinct identity and a recognisable, local character for MSP.

This aspiration has been applied to the advertisement strategy for Base, which will feature a consistent design that will tie in with the wider branding for the area and contribute towards the overarching character of MSP.

As the proposed advertisements are intended as a means of wayfinding and identification of the building, the Applicant considers that ensuring that these displays are well-designed is a key element to place-making in relation to both the new Base building and the wider MSP campus.

Application Proposal

The Application is for the erection of three signs: Entrance Sign, Traffic Directional Sign, and Gateway Totem Sign. Each Sign is explained in turn below.

Entrance Sign

An Entrance Sign depicting the name of the building 'BASE' is proposed to be erected to the North Elevation of the building adjacent to the main entrance. The letters will have depth to create a light-box effect and will be individually fixed to the gold cladding panels within the building elevation and will thus not require any separate sub-frame over the cladding. The lettering comprises stainless steel, which is proposed to be painted in dark grey (RAL 7021) and will have a white front which will be internally and statically illuminated to brighten the face of the sign.

The Sign has been specifically designed and located to ensure it is visible when viewed from the pedestrian route through the Site and will act as a means of wayfinding to direct people towards the entrance of the building. Further information and sign dimensions are provided in Table 1 below.

Traffic Directional Sign

A single Traffic Directional Sign is also proposed to the vehicular entrance point into the Site off Greenheys Lane. The location of the Sign is indicated as SN-07 in the Location Plan submitted in support of the planning application.

The sign is proposed as a means of wayfinding, directing visitors, staff and delivery drivers to the correct location. It includes the site address and the MSP branding and also acts as a means of providing directions for deliveries to the Base building and to disabled parking spaces on-site. It also provides directions for all other deliveries and visitor parking via Pencroft Way to ensure that parking and servicing can be managed appropriately.

The Sign is proposed to be made of high-quality materials comprising a black powder-coated 2mm aluminium panel with traffic white vinyl graphics applied directly onto the surface. The sign will be lifted off the ground by square profile (100mm x 100mm) steel posts with a rust verometal painted finish and stainless steel base caps. Further information and sign dimensions are provided in Table 1 below.

Gateway Totem Sign

A single Gateway Totem Sign is proposed to the northern corner of the Site adjacent to Greenheys Lane. The location of the Sign is indicated as SN-02 in the attached Location Plan submitted in support of the planning application.

The Gateway Totem Sign is proposed to be freestanding with a foundation support and a triangular base and form. It comprises a fret cut natural finish aluminium self-supporting core with a steel frame. It is proposed to be internally illuminated.

Text will comprise the MSP and Bruntwood Sci-Tech logos fret cut into the 5mm black powder coated aluminium 'wrap', infilled with white opal acrylic text and back lit with an LED panel. The formed 'wrap' is proposed to be attached to core sub frame using discreet fixings.

The Gateway Totem Sign is located at the start of the pedestrian route through from Greenheys Lane, which runs past BASE, leading into the wider MSP area. It is proposed again as a means of wayfinding and to identify the building as a part of MSP. It also identifies the pedestrian route as a way into MSP.

Figure 1 below shows the proposed Gateway Totem Sign in situ within the landscaping and adjacent to the Base building.

For completeness, the details for each sign can be found in Table 1 overleaf.

Figure 1: Proposed Gateway Totem Sign in Situ



Table 1: Dimensions and Metrics of Proposed Advertisement

Sign	Dimensions	Height from Ground	Illumination	Cd/m2	Materials
Entrance Sign	Length: 5040mm; Height: 1370mm Depth: 40mm	3600mm	Static internal illumination	300	Stainless steel frame with acrylic face
Traffic Directional Sign	Length: 2000mm Height: 1600mm Depth: 2mm	400mm	n/a	n/a	Black powder coated 2mm aluminium panel, white vinyl graphics, and steel posts
Gateway Totem Sign	Length: 680mm Height: 2600mm Depth: 600mm	0mm.	Static internal illumination	200	Self-supporting steel sub frame, 5mm coated aluminium wrap infilled with white opal acrylic text.

Further details on the initial specification, design and location of the signage being proposed can be found on the enclosed plans and the Application Form submitted in support of the Application via the Planning Portal.

National Planning Policy & Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the following guidance in relation to outdoor advertisements within *Chapter 12. Achieving well-designed places* at Paragraph 136:

‘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.’

Planning Practice Guidance (‘live’ document)

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides further clarification of the matters that can be taken into account when assessing applications for Express Advertisement Consent in relation to public safety and amenity.

In terms of public safety, the PPG details at Paragraph: 067 (Reference ID: 18b-067-20140306; Revision date: 06 03 2014) that advertisements are less likely to create road safety problems if they are located away from roads, junctions, roundabouts, pedestrian crossings or other places where local conditions

represent traffic hazards. In addition, there are also less likely to be road safety problems if the advertisement is on a site within a commercial locality.

Signs also need to ensure they do not obstruct or confuse a driver's view and that internally illuminated signs must not be overly bright or be subject to frequent changes of the display (Paragraph: 068; Reference ID: 18b-068-20140306; Revision date: 06 03 2014).

In terms of amenity, the PPG reiterates the wording of the Advertisement Regulations and the NPPF in stating that amenity is understood to mean the effect on visual and aural amenity in the immediate neighbourhood of an advertisement (Paragraph: 079; Reference ID: 18b-079-20140306; Revision date: 06 03 2014). Therefore, in assessing amenity, a Local Planning Authority should always consider the local characteristics of the neighbourhood and whether the proposed advertisement is in keeping with that setting.

National Design Guide (2019)

The National Design Guide was published by the Ministry of Communities and Local Government in October 2019 and is a material consideration in the determination of a planning application. It sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It notes at Paragraph 99 that signage plays a part in achieving well-designed places.

Local Planning Policy

Manchester Core Strategy (2012)

The Core Strategy does not set out specific policies related to advertisements. However, *Policy DM1 – Development Management* sets out a range of specific issues to which all development should have regard, including:

- Regard to appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and details; and
- Regard of the character of the surrounding area, and the impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development.

Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan (2012)

While the Core Strategy supersedes a large number of the policies contained within the Unitary Development Plan (UPD), a number of policies were 'saved' in 2012 and remain in effect today. This includes *Policy DC15 – Advertisements, Hoardings and Posters* which sets out that:

'The Advertisement Regulations requires that applications for advertisements be considered only in the interest of amenity and public safety.'

In assessing the interest of amenity and safety the Council will take account of the following criteria:

- a) Developments of this kind should not harm the character or architectural features of a building, no interfere with its proper use;*
- b) They should be in scale with the locality and relate properly to the site on which they stand;*
- c) They should be unobtrusive and should not intrude into residential neighbourhoods and areas of high amenity value;*

- d) 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.*

Where having regard to the proceeding policies, the Council considers the proposed development to be acceptable in principle, conditions may be imposed in order to protect safety and amenity.'

Compliance with Planning Policy & Guidance

A review of the relevant policies and guidance has identified three key considerations for an advertisement application, as covered in the headings below.

Appropriateness for Setting / Design

The uses immediately surrounding the Site to the east and north are all associated with MSP. This comprises the Greenheys Business Centre (occupying land immediately to the north) and the (vacant) McDougall Centre, which was previously a multi-faith prayer centre for the University of Manchester, located further to the north.

To the west and beyond Greenheys Lane, there are existing residential properties. The Ahmadiyya Mosque is located to the south and separated from the Site by a large surface car park. Rutherford House, a four storey office building is positioned directly to the east of the Site. The wider MSP campus also includes a number of commercial office buildings, including the Bright Building, which opened in 2017.

As such, the area surrounding the Site is characterised by a mix of modern and past architecture associated with a range of uses. There is no overriding architectural or design style locally, and thus the signs have been designed to be consistent with the design of the Base building, as well as the existing branding of the wider MSP campus. Please see the plans submitted in support of the application for further details.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposed advertisements are appropriately designed and are suitable for this location.

Public Safety

The construction and installation of these displays will take place with reference to best practices. The advertisements are a mix of both illuminated and non-illuminated.

Entrance Sign

The Entrance Sign is proposed to be located to the north elevation of the building and will thus not be easily visible from Greenheys Lane or from elsewhere on the surrounding road network. It is also proposed to be statically illuminated with a relatively low level of illumination. The Entrance Sign is proposed to be located 3.6m above ground level and will thus be out of reach. The letters will also be individually securely fixed to the building elevation. It is therefore considered that the Entrance Sign will not adversely impact public safety within the area.

Traffic Directional Sign

The Traffic Directional Sign is proposed to be located in a visible location at the entrance of the vehicular access point into the Site from Greenheys Lane with the purpose of identifying the building address and

ensuring road users are directed to or away from the Site appropriately. The scale of the address writing has been specifically designed to be at least 2 inches in height which is a requirement of the MCC Address Management team. The sign is not proposed to be illuminated.

The purpose of the Traffic Directional Sign is to be visible to people entering the Site, however, the text and nature of the sign has been specifically designed to be simple and easy to read and will thus not distract road users. It is therefore considered to not adversely impact public safety within the area.

Gateway Totem Sign

Although the Gateway Totem Sign is located towards Greenheys Lane, it is set back from the pavement and is located within the public realm within the Site. It is also proposed to be located away from any vehicular junctions. It will therefore not obstruct or confuse a driver's view.

Although the Gateway Totem Sign is proposed to be internally illuminated, the areas of illumination are not excessive and are proportionate to the Site and the surroundings, including the local highways network. The illuminated text and illuminated core will both have a relatively low level of static illumination and thus will not distract road users. The text is also proposed to be subtly designed with a maximum height of 52mm.

It is therefore considered that the Gateway Totem Sign will not adversely impact public safety within the area.

Amenity

Regarding any impact on amenity, and in considering both the local characteristics of the surrounding area to the Site, it is considered that the proposed signs are unobtrusive and will be in keeping with the scale and form of the existing features of the Site's immediate context.

Although the Entrance Sign and the Gateway Totem Sign will both be internally illuminated, the illumination is proposed to be static and will be at a relatively low level to avoid any light spillage to neighbouring properties. The Entrance Sign will also not be visible from adjacent residential properties due to its location. Furthermore, none of the proposed signs will have an audible element.

On this basis, it is considered that amenity will not be adversely affected by the proposed signs, and that visual amenity is enhanced. Therefore, the Application satisfies the requirements of planning policy with regard to due consideration of these matters.

Summary

The proposed advertisements are of a suitable scale, are unobtrusive on the streetscape and have no adverse effect on heritage, amenity or safety. Therefore, the proposals are considered to be in accordance with national and local planning policy and the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) and we respectfully request that Manchester City Council approve this Application for consent to display advertisements.

Submission

The Application comprises this Letter and the following:

- Completed Application Form and Certificates – prepared by Deloitte LLP;
- Advertisement Consent Application Fee of £132.00 which has been paid to Manchester City Council

via the Planning Portal under reference: PP-10017001.

Supporting information:

- Location Plan;
- 0237-SK050B BASE Entrance Sign Plan;
- Base_SN07_DID EX-07 - Traffic Directional Sign Plan; and
- SIN-02 - Small Gateway Totem Sign Plan.

We hope that you have all the information you need to validate the Application, and we look forward to receiving written confirmation of their registration. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or my colleague Jennifer Chatfield (+44 161 455 8084 / jchatfield@deloitte.co.uk) if you have any questions or require any further information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J Cooper'.

John Cooper
Deloitte LLP