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26 August 2020

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

F.A.O. Jennifer Connor

Dear Jennifer

**Application for Advertisement Consent relating to the display of hoardings 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 Bruntwood SciTech Limited.

The Application is for Advertisement Consent to erect hoarding advertisements to the perimeter of the Base site at Manchester Science Park, located at Greenheys Lane, Manchester M15 6LR 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, Manchester Science Park, 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."*

A contractor has been appointed for the project and construction of the new building is due to commence in summer 2020, with completion targeted for Q1 2023.

The development is underpinned by the Manchester Science Park (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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The SRF sets out a vision for MSP based on the following principles:

- Creation of an innovation ecosystem, leveraging Manchester Science Park's advantages in terms of locational clustering with major knowledge and research institutions, the wider economic assets of the city and support from stakeholders, to produce commercially viable products and services, encourage entrepreneurship and drive sustainable economic growth.
- Transformation of the physical environment, and delivery of a prestigious, iconic science park, which raises the profile of Manchester Science Park and will appeal to national and international occupiers.
- Getting the property product right for occupiers – more than a standard office park service.
- Capitalising upon the capacity and scale for expansion – providing modern, flexible units that meet the needs of all occupiers – in order to ensure that it maximises its contribution to delivery of GM's economic strategy.
- Creating an environment and facilities that provide opportunities to bring people, resources and links together.
- Delivering an innovation hub (the Bright Building), which can be occupied by high value, knowledge-dependent businesses and foster a sense of community.

These principles were underpinned by a recognition that new development would be delivered in a way strengthened linkages between MSP and Hulme and Moss Side, to ensure that the benefits of growth are shared.

Central to this is an aspiration to create a genuine sense of distinct identity and a recognisable, local character for MSP. This aspiration has been applied to the hoarding 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 hoardings are required to screen the Site while construction activities are underway, the Applicant considers that ensuring that these hoardings 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 Site is identified on the site plan submitted with the Application. The Application seeks permission to erect hoarding advertisements to the perimeter of the Base Site while construction works are underway. The hoardings are proposed to the north, west, east and south-east sections of the Site perimeter. Debris netting will be installed to the existing fence at the south-west perimeter. The proposed hoardings have high regard for design quality and will make a positive contribution towards place-making in the area.

The hoardings will display a mix of typologies including illustrations and iconography, background and illustration patterns, 3D imagery, and text which is in keeping with the overall MSP brand. A key ambition for MSP is that it contributes towards economic growth in the area both in the built environment through delivering new buildings and enhanced public realm areas, but also through deepening community engagement and public involvement in projects. It is envisaged that the hoardings will provide an informative and attractive interface for the Site boundary, which will provide interest for residents and passers-by, and will also enhance the visual appearance of the Site during construction.

All hoardings will be manufactured in high quality materials comprising plywood and a 3mm composite aluminium with anti-graffiti coating, in a style which complements the contemporary design of the building. Further details on the initial specification, design and location of the signage being proposed can be found on the enclosed design information and the Application Form submitted in support of the Application via the Planning Portal.

Given the expected timescales for construction, the Applicant will keep the hoardings and signage under review and potentially may seek to refresh the content and design of the signage element through the construction programme. It is therefore requested that an appropriately worded planning condition be attached to any decision notice to enable any future content to be agreed with the local planning authority.

## National Planning Policy & Guidance

### National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the following guidance in relation to outdoor advertisements within *Chapter 12. Achieving well-designed places* at Paragraph 132:

*'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 – Advisements, 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 regarding 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 historical architecture associated with a range of uses. There is no overriding architectural or design style locally, and thus the hoardings 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 Advertisement Proposal design pack submitted in support of the Application for further details.

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

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**Public Safety**

The main contractor has erected hoardings, which are currently blank. Should consent be granted for this Application, a specialist company will be appointed to install the hoarding display boards.

The construction and installation of these display boards will take place with reference to best practices. The hoardings are static advertisements and will not be illuminated.

It is therefore considered that the signage proposals 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 hoardings will be in keeping with the scale and form of the existing features of the Site's immediate context. The hoardings will not be illuminated and have no audible element.

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

## Summary

For the reasons set out above, the hoardings proposed through this Application for Advertisement Consent are considered to comply with the relevant National and Local policies and guidance. There are no other relevant policy considerations, and as such it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with the Development Plan and relevant material considerations.

## Submission

The Application comprises this letter and the following:

- Completed Application Form and Certificates – prepared by Deloitte LLP;
- Advertisement Consent Application Fee of £462.00 which has been paid to Manchester City Council via the Planning Portal under reference PP- 09009554;
- Supporting information:
  - Site Red Line Plan (dwg. no. BA-BAR-01-XX-DR-A-05-0001) – prepared by Bridge Architects;
  - Advertisement Proposal and Branding – prepared by the Applicant;
  - Advertisement Consent Surrounding Environment Plan – prepared by the Applicant; and
  - Hoarding measurements – prepared by the Applicant.

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 colleagues Laura Feekins (0161 455 6324/ lfeekins@deloitte.co.uk) and Amy Kennedy (0161 455 6771 / amkennedy@deloitte.co.uk) if you have any questions or require any further information.

Yours sincerely



John Cooper
Deloitte LLP

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