Paul Butler Associates
Planning, Development & Heritage Consultants

21 November 2017

Mrs Julie Roscoe
Head of Planning
Manchester City Council
Town Hall
Albert Square
Manchester
M60 2LA

Ljr/16.1030/rt02

Dear Mrs Roscoe,

341 Great Western Street, Rusholme, Manchester, M14 4AL
Submission of Planning Application for External alterations including Application of Cladding to part of East Elevation and Advertisement Consent for Installation of 'Beech Properties' sign, and branding Manifestation film to Doors/Windows

Introduction

We are pleased to submit this application for Planning Permission and Advertisement Consent on behalf of our client Beech Holdings. The application proposal is for external alterations including cladding of part of east elevation and advertisement consent for installation of illuminated 'Beech Properties' sign, and branding manifestation film to doors/windows.

Beech Properties is part of the Beech group of companies. Beech Properties is a landlord company that specialises in providing energy-efficient accommodation primarily to students in Manchester. Part of the ground floor of 341 Great Western Street is occupied by the offices of Beech Properties with the majority of the building currently being converted to apartments. The proposed external works and advertisements are required to make the offices easier for existing and prospective future tenants to find the Beech Properties offices.

In order to provide a clear understanding of the application proposal this letter provides a brief background to the application site and its surroundings; includes a description of the proposed external alterations and advertisements; sets out the planning policy guidance of relevance to the proposal; and, assesses the proposed external alterations and advertisements against the relevant planning policy context.

Application Site and Surroundings

The application site *[Fig. 1]* is bounded by Heald Grove to the west, 75 Heald Grove (a 3/4 storey student accommodation building) to the south *[Fig. 3]*, Manchester Student Village South (a 4 storey student accommodation building) to the east *[Fig. 4]*, and a 3 storey building which forms part of the Ropemakers Court student accommodation development) to the north *[Fig. 5]*. Located on the opposite side of Heald Grove from the application site is a terrace of traditional 2 storey dwellings *[Fig. 6]*.

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Figure 1: Aerial view of the application site.



Figure 2: View of 341 Great Wester Street from Great Western Street.



Figure 3: View of 75 Heald Grove.



Figure 4: View of Manchester Student Village South from Great Western Street.



Figure 5: View of Ropemakers Court.



Figure 6: View of 2 storey terrace properties on Heald Grove opposite the application site.

341 Great Western Street is a two storey building constructed of red brick beneath a pitched tiled roof *[Fig. 2]*. The building is occupied by the offices of Beech Properties with the majority of the building currently being converted to apartments. Approval for conversion of the majority of the building to apartments was granted on 01.11.2016 by application 111564/P3OPA/2016 for *'Prior approval for the change of use of part of the ground floor and the entirety of the first and second floors from offices to 3 x studio apartments and 14 x 2 bedroom apartments'.*

The subject building is not of any heritage interest nor is it located within a conservation area.

The Application Proposal

Beech Properties' offices are located at 341 Great Western Street. As noted previously Beech Properties are a landlord company that specialise in providing energy-efficient properties for students in Manchester. The majority of Beech Properties' accommodation is located within the Rusholme/Moss Side area in close proximity to the site.

The operation of the offices sometimes involves existing and prospective future tenants visiting the premises. In order to make it easier for tenants to find the offices; improve the legibility of the building's residential entrance; and, ensure that the building fits in with and promotes the Beech brand, a series of works are proposed including:

- Application of horizontal cladding battens (comprising synthetic wood) to part of east elevation;
- Installation of internally illuminated 'Beech Properties' logo comprising metal letters; and,
- Branding manifestation film being applied to glazed doors and windows.

Planning Policy Context

Planning policy guidance of relevance to the proposal is contained within the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007; the National Planning Policy Framework (2012); National Planning Practice Guidance; Manchester's Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012); Saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (July 1995); and, the Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (2007).

Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007

Government Circular 03/2007 Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 requires local planning authorities to exercise their powers in relation to impact on amenity or public safety only, taking into account relevant development plan policies so far as they relate to amenity or public safety.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)

Published in March 2012, the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It advises that planning law requires applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Of particular relevance to the proposal, the NPPF states:

- *'To help achieve economic growth, local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st Century.'* (Paragraph 20)
- *'Investment in business should not be over-burdened by the combined requirements of planning policy expectations.'* (Paragraph 21)
- *'The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively by making places better for people.'* (Paragraph 56)
- *'Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments…create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion'* (Paragraph 58)

- *'Poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment. Control over outdoor advertisements should be efficient, effective and simple in concept and operation…Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts' (Paragraph 67).*

National Planning Practice Guidance

The government published guidance on design and advertisements via the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) website on 6 March 2014.

In terms of design NPPG reinforces the NPPF and advises that good quality design is an integral part of sustainable development and as a core planning principle, plan makers and decision takers should always seek to secure high quality design.

With regards to advertisements the guidance states: *'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'.*

The guidance goes on to state that *'local planning authorities* [should] *control the display of advertisements in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account the provisions of the development plan, in so far as they are material, and any other relevant factors'.*

The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012)

The Core Strategy was adopted on July 2012 and is the key Development Plan Document. Relevant policies within the Core Strategy include:

Policy SP1 'Spatial Principles': states that development in all parts of the City should make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including protecting and enhancing the built and natural environment.

Policy DM1 'Development Management': states that all development should have regard to the following specific issues:-

- Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.
- Impact on the surrounding area in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.
- Effects on amenity.

Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (July 1995)

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was superseded by the Core Strategy. However, a number of UDP polices have been 'saved'. Extant polices contained within the UDP which are relevant to the proposed scheme include:

Policy DC14 'Shop Fronts and Related Signs' seeks to ensure that the frontages and signage of commercial premises are in keeping with the character of the building and the surrounding area.

Policy DC15 'Advertisements, hoardings and posters': which states that the Advertisement Regulations require that applications for advertisements be considered only in the interests of amenity and public safety. The Council will take account of the following matters in assessing these interests:

a) The general location of the proposed development and the effect on visual amenity;
b) The scope for posters and hoardings to make a positive contribution to the locality;
c) The design of the structures, and the relationship with any premises on which they are located;
d) The effect of the proposal on permanent redevelopment of the land;
e) Public safety resulting from the positioning of the design of the display;
f) The ease with which the structure is capable of being satisfactorily maintained;
g) The use of hoardings to screen vacant sites or buildings during development, or where development is known to be imminent;
h) The number of advertisements in the locality and their cumulative effect on visual amenity.

The Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (2007)

Guidance contained within this document of relevance to the proposal includes:

Chapter 2 'Design': which states new development, whether for residential, industrial, commercial or retail purposes, should have a high standard of design making a positive contribution to the City's environment.

For the reasons identified below, it is considered that the proposal accords with the above planning policy guidance.

Planning Appraisal

The key material considerations against which the proposed works and advertisements should be considered include: effect on amenity; and, effect on public safety.

Principle of External Alterations and Advertisements

The application proposal involves the installation of horizontal cladding battens to part of the east elevation of the building at ground and first floor levels. The battens will be installed around the residential entrance to the building and will help to improve its legibility as an entrance. The battens will be anthracite grey in colour with 'light grey' and 'plum' coloured battens located at the top of the area to provide visual interest and tie in with the Beech branding.

The proposed advertisements are required to make it easier for existing and prospective tenants to locate Beech Properties' offices and apartments. The advertisement include an illuminated 'Beech Properties' sign installed to the face of the building and the application of branding manifestation film to doors and windows. The advertisements will provide consistency with the Beech Properties brand and help to visually identify the building's entrances for tenants visiting the offices and residents/visitors to the apartments.

Design, Visual Appearance and Effect on Amenity

In accordance with national and local planning policy it is necessary to consider the impact of the proposed external alterations and advertisements in terms of their design and visual appearance.

As noted above the horizontal cladding battens are proposed to improve the visual legibility of the residential entrance to the building. The battens will be coloured to reflect Beech Properties' branding. The battens will be made from recycled plastic, reflecting Beech's environmental aspirations, with a timber effect finish. The use of this material will ensure they are robust and will not degrade because of environmental conditions. The horizontal battens will be fixed to vertical battens that will in turn fix to the face of the building. This approach will minimise the number of fixing required and mean that the battens will be capable of removal at a future date without any significant lasting impact on the appearance of the building or its fabric.

In terms of the proposed advertisements, the scheme involves the replacement of a former 'MCR House' sign located on the south elevation of the building *[Fig. 7 and 8]* with an internally illuminated 'Beech Properties' sign. The location of this sign ensures that it is visible from Great Western Street across the site's car park and is close to the main entrance of the building. The size of the sign is appropriate to ensure that it will be legible from Great Western Street, whilst the illumination of the sign is important to ensure that the building can be identified during dark evenings. The illumination will be static and will be of a level that ensures it does not have an adverse impact on the amenity of any residents living within 341 Great Western Street or any nearby buildings.



Figure 7: View of 341 Great Western Street identifying the location of former 'MCR House' sign located on the south elevation of the building (outlined red).



Figure 8: Enlarged view of former 'MCR House' sign.

Glazing manifestations will be installed to doors and windows. These will be in 'Beech Properties' corporate colours and will enhance the appearance of the building. The glazing manifestation could be easily removed at a future date if required without any permanent impact.

In summary, the proposed external alterations and signage/branding will not have an adverse impact on the appearance of the building nor will it have an adverse effect on amenity.

Effect of Advertisements on Public Safety

Planning policy guidance states that new signage should not present any risk to highway or public safety.

341 Great Western Street is separated from the highway by its access road and car parking. The 'Beech Properties' sign will not act as a distraction for motorists and will not be in the direct line of sight of drivers, other than those of vehicles accessing the site, who will be travelling at a lower speed and driving with greater care. The glazing manifestations will have no impact on highway safety.

In terms of pedestrian safety, the advertisements will not present any issues. The Beech Properties sign will be installed to brickwork between ground and first floor level and will not be prone to vandalism or any other forms of antisocial behaviour. The glazing manifestations will be installed to the internal face of the glazing and do not present any risk to members of the public.

In conclusion, it is clear that the proposed external alterations and advertisements will not have an adverse impact on amenity or public safety. As a result, the proposal is in accordance with relevant national and local planning policy guidance.

Submission Information

The following information has been submitted in support of the application:

Documents

- Completed Application Forms for Planning Permission and Consent to Display Advertisements.

Drawings

Drawing No.	Rev	Drawing Name	Scale	Papersize
083_006	P1	Location Plan	1:1250	A3
083_007	P1	Block Plan	1:200	A3
083_207	P1	Existing Elevation 1	1:100	A3
083_208	P1	Proposed Elevation 1	1:100	A3
083_209	P1	Existing Elevation 2	1:100	A3
083_210	P1	Proposed Elevation 2	1:100	A3
083_211	P1	Elevation Details	As noted	A3

The above information has been submitted alongside the application forms via the planning portal. A cheque for the application fee (amounting to £305) has been submitted via post with a hard copy of this covering letter.

We look forward to confirmation that the application has been validated. In the meantime, if you require any further information in order to determine the application please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely



Ralph Taylor BSc. MPLAN MRTPI
Planner

CC Roxane Jones, Beech Holdings