

28 August 2025

Delivered via Planning Portal

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Planning and Building Control
Manchester City Council
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Manchester
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Our ref: IQSM3015

Dear Jennifer

**APPLICATION FOR ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT FOR THE INSTALLATION OF SIGNAGE TO IQ STUDENT
ACCOMMODATION'S APPROVED ECHO STREET DEVELOPMENT, MANCHESTER, M1 3QJ**

On behalf of iQ Student Accommodation ('iQ' / 'the Applicant'), I am pleased to enclose an application for advertisement consent to enable the installation of new signage to iQ's approved¹ Echo Street development (currently under construction) on Land between Echo Street, Granby Row, Vimto Gardens and Manchester, South Junction and Altrincham railway viaduct.

The application has been submitted via the Planning Portal, and comprises electronic copies of the following documents:

- Completed Application Forms and Certificates
- This Covering Letter
- Site Location Plan (dwg ref. ECHO-SRA-ZS-XX-DR-A-02001 P02), prepared by Sheppard Robson
- Echo Street External Signage Version 2, prepared by xsign
- IQ STUDENT - ECHO ST. - TYPE 1 PLANNING DRAWING (dwg ref.63073-XSI-ZZ-ZZ-DR-Y-7070 P01), prepared by xsign
- IQ STUDENT - ECHO ST. - TYPE 2 PLANNING DRAWING (dwg ref.63073-XSI-ZZ-ZZ-DR-Y-7071 P01), prepared by xsign
- IQ STUDENT - ECHO ST. - TYPE 2 PLANNING DRAWING (dwg ref.63073-XSI-ZZ-ZZ-DR-Y-7071 P01), prepared by xsign

¹ LPA ref. 136874/FO/2023

Level 5
Transmission
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- IQ STUDENT - ECHO ST. - TYPE 3 PLANNING DRAWING (dwg ref.63073-XSI-ZZ-ZZ-DR-Y-7072 P01), prepared by xsign
- IQ STUDENT - ECHO ST. - TYPE 4 PLANNING DRAWING (dwg ref.63073-XSI-ZZ-ZZ-DR-Y-7073 P01), prepared by xsign
- IQ STUDENT - ECHO ST. - TYPE 5 PLANNING DRAWING (dwg ref.63073-XSI-ZZ-ZZ-DR-Y-7074 P01), prepared by xsign

The requisite application fee of £168.00 has been paid to Manchester City Council ('MCC') via the Planning Portal (ref. PP-14270360).

Background

As you are aware, in May 2023, full planning permission was granted for the erection of 3 interlinked towers ranging from 27, 21 and 16 storeys together with intermediary link buildings (15 and 11 storeys) to form Purpose Built Student Accommodation (Sui Generis) with associated amenity space and external landscaping and other associated works (LPA ref. 136874/FO/2023). The permission includes a number of conditions to be discharged.

Condition 32 attached to 136874/FO/2023 requires a signage strategy to be submitted prior to the first occupation of the development. An application to discharge this condition has been submitted concurrently with this application for advertisement consent.

The Application Proposal

Full details of each sign type are within the submitted document, Echo Street External Signage Version 1, prepared by xsign. A summary of each of the five proposed signs is provided below.

Sign Type 1, Sign Type 2 and Sign Type 3

The sign is 7.7m high x 1m wide and 0.16m deep. It is proposed to sit 0.38m from the wall, using an Aluminium 6063 grade box section. The roundel, which features the iQ logo, will comprise a face and halo-illuminated stainless-steel built-up logo with 80mm deep returns and Perspex opal acrylic back diffusers. It will be mounted on oversized 3mm ACM composite back plates, via 25mm long aluminium tube spacers.

The lettering will be halo-illuminated with brushed stainless-steel faces (grain direction perpendicular to the ground), welded to brushed stainless steel returns. The letters will be mounted to Perspex Opal 030 acrylic carriers/diffusers, and oversized 3mm ACM composite back plates using 25mm long aluminium tube spacers.

The illumination will be static and internal with dimmable LED modules. The Lux will not exceed 600.

Sign Type 1, Sign Type 2 and Sign Type 3 will be located on the east, south and west elevation of Block C of the Proposed Development, respectively.

Sign Type 4

Sign Type 4 is a double-sided projecting sign with internal mild steel framework. It is 2.5m high x 0.55m wide, with a depth of 0.12m. The sign will comprise brushed stainless steel folded tray panels (grain direction perpendicular to floor), with fret cut details to the face, backed up in Perspex opal 040 acrylic. The sign will be illuminated using static, internal illumination with dimmable LED modules. Illumination levels will not exceed 600Lux.

Sign Type 4 will be located approximately 4m above ground level on the west elevation of Block C.

Sign Type 5

Sign Type 5 will be located directly above the main entrance, the sign is 0.4m high x 2.1m wide, and 0.057m in depth. The roundel will comprise a halo-illuminated stainless steel (grain direction perpendicular to ground) built up logo with 40mm deep returns and Perspex opal acrylic back diffusers. The letters will feature brushed stainless-steel faces (grain direction perpendicular to ground), welded to brushed stainless steel returns. The sign will be illuminated using static, internal illumination with dimmable LED modules. Illumination levels will not exceed 300Lux.

Sign Type 5 will be located on the north elevation facing onto Granby Row.

Legislative and Policy Context

The considerations upon which the advertisement consent application needs to be assessed are detailed within the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007, Saved Policy DC15 (Advertisements) of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan 1998 (UDP), the National Planning Policy Framework (“the Framework”) and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Examination of these documents indicates that the material planning considerations for this application relate to amenity and public safety.

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

The Regulations require Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to assess applications for advertisement consent against the issues of public safety and amenity.

With regards to public safety, LPAs are expected to have regard to the effect of signage upon the safe use and operation of any form of traffic or transport on land (including the safety of pedestrians). This will include consideration of matters such as the likely behaviour of drivers of vehicles who see the advertisement and possible confusion with any traffic sign or other signal. LPAs should also bear in mind adverts can positively benefit public safety by directing drivers to their destination. The key consideration in assessing an adverts’ impact, is whether the advertisement itself, or the location, is likely to be so distracting or confusing, that it endangers people in the vicinity who are taking reasonable care for their own and others’ safety.

In terms of amenity, LPAs should have regard to an adverts’ effect on the appearance of the building or on visual amenity in the immediate neighbourhood/ surroundings where it is to be displayed. The relevant considerations for this purpose are the local characteristics of the neighbourhood, including scenic, historic, architectural or cultural features, which contribute to the distinctive character of the locality.

Saved UDP Policy DC15 (Advertisements, Hoardings and Posters)

Saved Policy DC15 of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP) relates to advertisements and confirms that, in assessing the interests of amenity and safety, the Council will ensure that adverts do 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. The policy confirms that 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.

National Planning Policy Framework & Planning Practice Guidance

A revised Framework was published in February 2019. In relation to advertisements, Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) confirms that the location of proposed advertisements are to be fully considered to ensure signage does not have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment. The Framework states that control over outdoor advertisements should be efficient, effective and simple and reaffirms that advertisements can only be subject to control in the interests of public safety and amenity, taking account of cumulative impact.

Planning Practice Guidance² updated in July 2019, references both the advert regulations and the Framework, whilst reiterating the same advertisement guidance in respect of amenity and public safety.

Planning Appraisal

The proposed signage is consistent with the key objectives of adopted local and national planning policy. A summary of the key planning considerations is provided below.

Amenity

Sign Types 1- 3 are located near to the top of the proposed development, at c. 76m, 76m and 43m above ground level respectively. These three signs have been designed to provide legibility for the Proposed Development. The signs will not be overly prominent or visually obtrusive and the size, location, positioning and nature of the advertisements are compatible with their location such that they will not adversely affect the visual amenity of the area, rather they complement the buildings on which they are located. People are likely to see the signs as they approach the building and as such they will assist with wayfinding.

Sign Types 4 and 5 are closer to ground level and will improve legibility and wayfinding on a human scale. The signage is in keeping with its setting and will facilitate users finding the main entrance with ease. There will be no adverse impact on the visual amenity of the area.

Safety

The main safety considerations relate to the siting of the signs and the potential for the signs to distract drivers. In this respect, Sign Type 4 and Sign Type 5 will be visible from Granby Row, which is not considered a busy highway for traffic or pedestrians, and are minimal in appearance, with the colouring and lettering being non-obtrusive. The signs have been designed to ensure there is no impact on public safety – they are at a height and luminosity such that they would not cause distraction. Furthermore, the signs at a height will not be visible to nearby road users and so will not cause undue distraction.

Sign Type 5 is located at the principle access point to the building and will be able to be ‘read’ at a glance and not distract drivers. Indeed, the signs have been designed to be visible from a distance, such that they are legible. Furthermore, Sign Types 4 and 5 will be limited to 600lux and 300 lux static internal illumination, there will be no issues of public safety around flashing / backlit signage.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed signage is in line with the provisions of the advertisement regulations, saved UDP Policy DC15 and the Framework. The careful location, positioning and design of the signage results in there being no impact upon amenity or safety and the proposal is considered acceptable in principle.

I trust that you have everything you require to validate and determine this application, though please do not hesitate to make contact if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/advertisements>

