

22 October 2024

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

Dear Angela,

Application for Advertisement Consent to erect two freestanding directional and instructional signs, and a digital totem sign at Citylabs 4.0, Hathersage Road, Manchester

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'). The Applicant is Bruntwood SciTech Limited.

The Site

The Site to which this application relates comprises the land south of Hathersage Road, within the Oxford Road Corridor in Manchester, to which Planning Permission for Citylabs 4.0 was granted in March 2020 (Ref. 125592/FO/2019 amended by ref: 137176/NMC/2023) ("the Site").

Background

Background Planning Permission was granted for the Site on 20 March 2020 for the development of Citylabs 4.0 (Ref. 125592/FO/2019 amended by ref: 137176/NMC/2023), described as follows:

"Erection of a seven storey building comprising flexible Office (Use Class B1a), Research and Development (Use Class B1b) and Educational Space (Use Class D1), together with ground floor ancillary Retail uses (Use Classes A1 and A3), in addition to associated cycle parking, accessible car parking, landscaping, provision of plant and servicing and related access and highway's works, and other associated works (associated advert application reference 125593/AO/2019)."

Advertisement Consent (ref. 137158/AO/2023) was granted in September 2023 for the installation of four illuminated external fascia signs, and the erection of illuminated advertisement hoarding around the site perimeter. Since this advertisement consent was granted, the construction of Citylabs 4.0 has progressed and completion is targeting in early 2025.

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The Applicant has therefore reviewed the signage provided across the Site and identified that future signs are required to ensure suitable identification and directional information in relation to Citylabs 4.0, requiring a further application for advertisement consent.

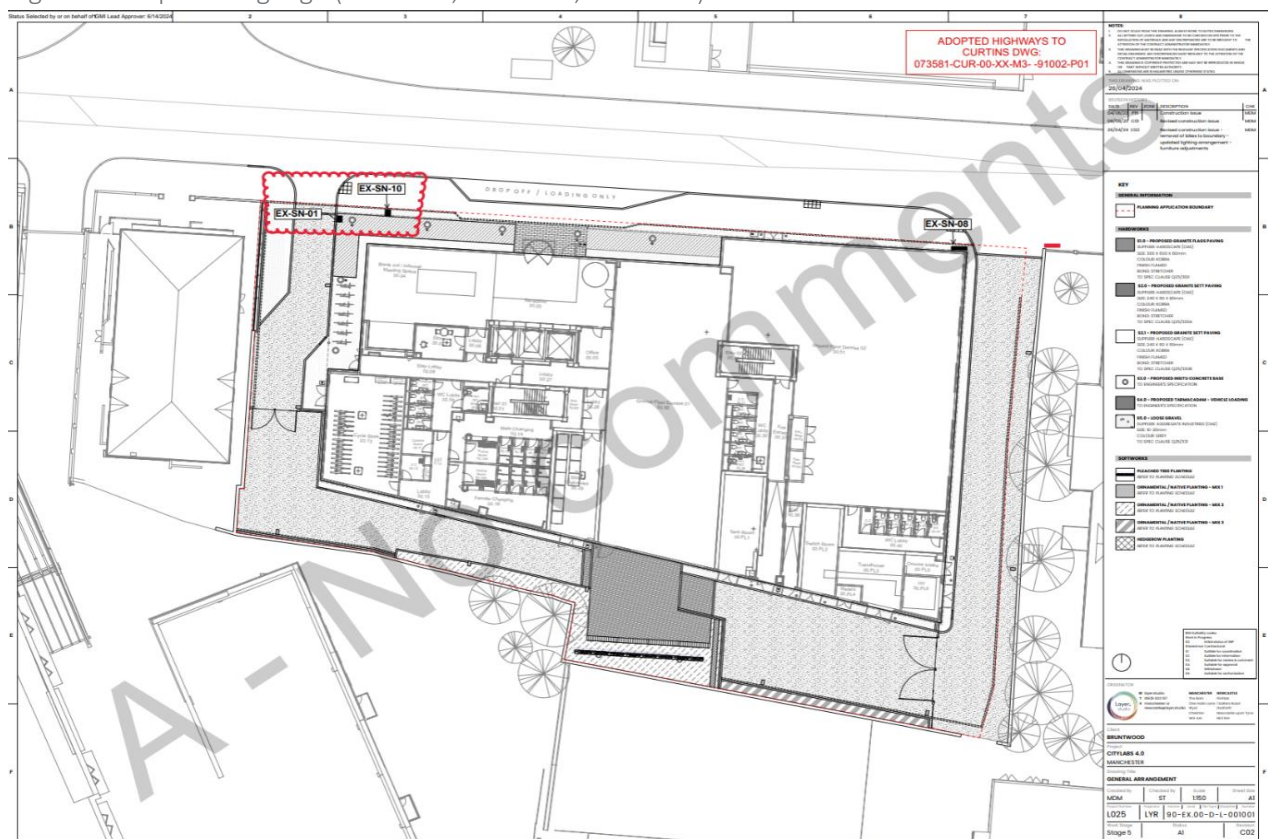
Proposed Advertisements

The Application seeks advertisement consent to erect the following signs at Citylabs 4.0. Further details regarding the location of each sign are shown in Figure 1:

- One Digital Internally Illuminated Totem Sign (EX-SN-10);
- One No Entry Sign (EX-SN-01); and
- One Directional Sign (EX-SN-08)

All signs are proposed on MCC Highways land.

Figure 1: Proposed Signage (EX-SN-10, EX-SN-08, EX-SN-01)



Further information on the proposed signage can be found in the Site Specifications document, prepared by Bruntwood SciTech, as well as in the Application Form, submitted in support of this Application for Advertisement Consent.

For completeness, additional details regarding the signage can be found in Table 1 and illustrated in Figures 2, 3 and 4 below.

Totem Sign (EX-SN-10)

EX-SN-10 is located to the northeastern extent of the Citylabs site along Hathersage Road and comprises a digital wayfinding totem with two back-to-back 43-inch LED screens. The wayfinding totem sign is proposed to be freestanding with a concrete foundation support with a fret cut aluminium finish self-supporting core (RAL 9011) and steel frame.

The totem is proposed to be used to display directional information and welcome messages and occasionally to advertise events taking place across the Citylabs campus. The signage will change at 10 second intervals.

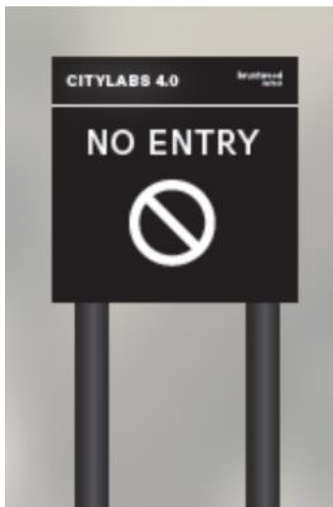
Figure 2: Proposed Totem, EX-SN-10



'No Entry' Sign (EX-SN-01)

Sign EX-SN-01 is located 4.4m away from the Citylabs 4.0 building to the northwestern extent of the site and visible from Hathersage Road. It comprises a PPC aluminium sign for the purpose of advising drivers to not enter the site from this access point. Further details on the proposed signage can be found in Table 1 and illustrated in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Proposed No Entry Sign



Directional Sign (EX-SN-08)

Sign EX-SN-08 is located to the northwestern extent of the site along Hathersage Road, 40cm away from the Citylabs 4.0 building. It comprises a PPC aluminium sign to advise on the access arrangements for deliveries, refuse collection, disabled parking and the main pedestrian entrance to the building. Further details on the proposed signage can be found in Table 1 and illustrated in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Proposed Directional Sign



Table 1: Dimensions and Metrics of EX-SN-10

Sign	Dimensions (height x width x depth) (mm)	Illumination	cD/m2	Materials
Totem Sign (EX-SN-10)	2,000 x 750 x 400 Maximum height of static text: 400	Internal Illumination	300 cD/m	Aluminium; Steel Frame; RAL 9011; Matt 069 opal acrylic finish intermittent internally illuminated header text; back-to-back 43 inch outdoor IP65 rated screens; high tac plotted matt white vinyl directional text content.
“No Entry” Sign (EX-SN-01)	600 x 600 x 30 Maximum height of each letter: 200 Height from the base of the sign to the ground: 1,000	No	n/a	The sign will be constructed out of PPC aluminium.
Directional Sign (EX-SN-08)	1,000 x 800 x 30 Maximum height of each individual letter: 100mm. Height from the base of the sign to the ground: 600mm.	No	n/a	The sign will be constructed out of PPC aluminium.

National Planning Policy & Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the following guidance in relation to outdoor advertisements within Chapter 12. Achieving well-designed places at Paragraph 141:

‘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 considered when assessing applications for Express Advertisement Consent in relation to public safety and amenity.

Regarding public safety, the PPG details that no advertisement is to be displayed which could obscure, or hinder the interpretation of any official road, rail, waterway, or aircraft sign, as it could be dangerous to the use of these modes of transport. In addition, there are also less likely to be road safety problems if the advertisement is on a site within a commercial locality. Proposals should also ensure that signage does not obstruct or confuse a driver's view and that internally illuminated sign must not be overly bright or be subject to frequent changes of the display. The display is currently set to change at 10 second intervals, therefore compliant with the PPG.

In terms of amenity, the PPG states 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. Therefore, when assessing amenity Local Planning Authorities should always consider the local characteristics of the neighbourhood and whether the proposed advertisement is in keeping with that setting. PPG suggests that "any advertisement must be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site."

National Design Guide (2019)

The National Design Guide was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in October 2019 (revised in 2021) 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 and with the revised versions, this has not been changed.

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:

- Consideration of appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials, and details.
- Regard to 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 many policies contained within the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), several policies were 'saved' in 2012 and remain in effect today. This includes Policy DC15 (Advertisements, Hoardings and Posters) which details 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 to protect safety and amenity.'

Compliance with Planning Policy and Guidance

Below is a review of the relevant policies and guidance which have been identified as the three considerations for an advertisement application, as covered by the headlines.

Appropriateness for Setting / Design

The majority of uses immediately surrounding Citylabs 4.0 are associated with the Citylabs Campus and the Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT). The main Manchester Royal Infirmary campus is located to the north, with the Ronald McDonald House situated directly to the north. To the west is Oxford Road, which comprises student accommodation and ground floor retail units and Whitworth Park. Vacant 20th century University of Manchester buildings are located directly to the south, and residential flats are located to the east. There is no overriding architectural or design style of building signage across the hospital campus or surrounding area and as such, the signs have been designed to be consistent with the existing signs found on Citylabs 1 and 2. The LED screen on the totem sign will display images relating to Citylabs 4.0. The level of illumination is suitable for the location and scale of the proposed advertisements as discussed further in the following section. It is therefore considered that the proposed signs are appropriately designed and are suitable for the location.

Public Safety

The construction and installation of these displays will take place with reference to the latest best practices. The intermittent element of the sign is unlikely to provide a distraction to drivers, as the imagery is proposed to change at 10 second intervals. Furthermore, it is considered that the illumination of the digital totem sign would be proportionate for its location, and its erection will not adversely impact

public safety within the area. The digital sign illumination is proposed to be maintained at 300 cd/m². The construction and installation of the signs will take place with reference to best practice.

The proposed directional signs will contribute to public safety by ensuring that visitors to Citylabs 4.0 are aware of access arrangements and do not enter servicing areas that could result in injury.

It is therefore considered that the signage proposals will maintain 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 advertisements will be keeping with the scale and form of the existing features of the Site's immediate context. The digital sign will be internally illuminated; however, the level of illumination is proposed to be proportionate and to a low level to avoid light spillage to neighbouring properties. Furthermore, it will not have an audible element. On this basis, it is considered that amenity will not be adversely affected by the proposed signage and that the application therefore satisfies the requirements of planning policy regarding consideration of these matters.

For the reasons set out above, the proposed signs at Citylabs 4.0, as applied for, 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 the relevant material considerations.

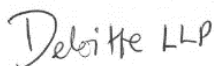
Submission

The application comprises this Letter and the following submitted via the Planning Portal (Ref: PP-13502441) alongside the requisite application fee of £165.00 plus the administrative fees from the Planning Portal:

- Completed Application Form and Certificates – prepared by Deloitte
- Sign Location Plan, prepared by Layer Studio;
- Sign Specifications Document prepared by Bruntwood SciTech.

We trust that you have all the information required to validate the Application, and we look forward to receiving written confirmation of their registration. Please do not hesitate to contact my colleague Ollie Eyre (odeyre@deloitte.co.uk / 020 7303 4102) if you have any questions or require any further information.

Yours sincerely



Deloitte LLP