

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 143290/P14J/2025
Date registered valid: 24 June 2025
Proposal: Prior Approval for the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels
Address: The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Ward(s): Piccadilly Ward

Applicant: DTZ Investors
Agent (if any): Heather Lindley-Clapp Nexus Planning
Case officer: Emily Booth
Tel: 0161 234 4193
Email: emily.booth@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve
Date of recommendation: 8 August 2025

Application details

Type of application: Prior approval - PV to non-dwelling

Development type: Notifications

Date of site visit: 10 July 2025

Standard consultations:

Printed: 27 June 2025 Expired: 18 July 2025

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 27 June 2025 Expired: 18 July 2025

Site notice

No site notice has been produced

Press advert

No press advert had been published

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

Listed building: Not applicable

Conservation area: Shudehill Conservation Area 1987

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

Description of area

The application relates to a building named the Printworks, which is bounded by Withy Grove, Garden Street, Well Street, Dantzic Street, Balloon Street and Corporation Street, and is located within the Shudehill Conservation Area. The property is a former printing works built in 1929 and is currently used as an entertainment complex with internal streets, night clubs, bars, restaurants and a cinema. The exterior elevations are mainly original and of interest due to the banding and detailing and the building is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset. It has been extensively amended internally.

Surrounding uses include the Arndale Shopping Centre, the Football Museum, Chetham's School of Music, Victoria Train Station, Shudehill transport interchange, a hotel, residential accommodation, offices, bars, restaurants and shops.

The closest listed buildings are the Grade II Listed Corn Exchange across Exchange Square and the Grade II Listed Victoria Buildings on Dantzic Street, Hanover Building on Balloon Street and City Buildings on Todd Street. The building is not within a Conservation Area but is opposite the Cathedral Conservation Area.

The building is a large structure adjacent to the junction of adopted highways of Dantzic Street and Well Street and there are long range views across Exchange Square.

Description of development

It is proposed to install 489 solar PV panels are proposed to be sited on areas of the existing flat rooves.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Manchester Airport Safeguarding Officer - Confirmed that they have no objections.

Highway Services - Advised on the required information for the construction period, relevant licensing and traffic management.

Environmental Health - Confirmed that they have no comments

Publicity - Local residents were notified of the proposals no responses were received.

Issues

Relevant Legislation and the Principle of Development:

Class J of Part 14 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 relates to the installation or alteration etc of solar equipment on non-domestic premises. This allows the installation, alteration, or replacement of:

- (a) microgeneration solar thermal equipment on a building.
- (b) microgeneration solar PV equipment on a building; or
- (c) other solar PV equipment on the roof of a building, other than a dwellinghouse or a block of flats.

J.1 Development is not permitted by Class J if—

- (a) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a pitched roof and would protrude more than 0.2 metres beyond the plane of the roof slope when measured from the perpendicular with the external surface of the roof slope.

Complies - The element of PV panels on the pitch roof will not protrude more than 0.2m

- (b) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a flat roof, where the highest part of the solar PV equipment would be higher than 1 metre above the highest part of the roof (excluding any chimney).

Complies - The applicant has confirmed that the equipment would not be higher than 1 metre above the highest part of the roof.

- (c) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed within 1 metre of the external edge of that roof.

Complies - The submitted drawings show that the equipment would not be within 1 metre of the external edge of the roof.

- (d) in the case of a building on article 2(3) land, the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a roof slope which fronts a highway.

Complies - The site is not within or on article 2(3) land.

(e) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a site designated as a scheduled monument; or

Complies - The site is not designated as a scheduled monument.

(f) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a listed building or on a building within the curtilage of a listed building.

Complies - The building is not listed.

Additional National Policy

Section 2 (Achieving sustainable development)

This chapter of the NPPF recognises the need to balance the use of resources to meet the challenges of environmental protection and climate change.

Paragraph 8c states that the environmental objective is to protect and enhance the natural, built, and historic environment, including adapting to climate change and moving to a low carbon economy.

Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places)

Paragraph 135 states that planning decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are sympathetic to local character and history, including surrounding built environment.

Section 14 (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding, and coastal change)

This chapter of the NPPF gives emphasis to the radical reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, extend the uptake of renewable energy, and mitigate negative climatic impacts due to flood risk, and overheating from rising temperatures.

Paragraph 161 states that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate. It should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

Paragraph 168 states that when determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon development, local planning authorities should:

- a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions:
- b) approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.

Sections 16, 66 and 74 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 requires that special consideration is given to the preservation of the significant fabric and setting of listed buildings and conservation areas. Development decisions should, therefore, accord with the requirements of the NPPF and to section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment).

It is a fundamental requirement of Section 12 of the NPPF that planning proposals contribute to the achievement of "sustainable development". In order to meet this key planning objective, in

this instance, the development should sustain and contribute to the stimulation of a thriving historic environment.

Layout, Scale and Appearance, including the impact on the affected heritage assets -

The Council supports the transition to a low carbon future and development in the historic environment is acceptable provided that the special significance of heritage assets is conserved.

The roof is subdivided into multiple flat roof areas and is cluttered various existing plant and signage infrastructure. 489 solar PV panels are proposed to be sited on areas of flat roof keeping at least 1m between the panels and the parapet. They would cover 177,2 m² of the 445,3 m² roof area.

The panels would be tilted at 10-degree tilt. The size of the panels varies and they would measure either 30cm x 15cm x 4.5cm or 30cm x 30cm x 4.5cm. They would sit on ballast frames avoiding roof penetration. The highest part of each panel would be elevated under 500mm off the roof surface which would be below the parapet.

Given the height of the building, the amount of roof infrastructure and the low angle of tilt and the distance from the edge of the roof, there would be no views of the PV panels from street level. It is possible that there may be views of the panels from longer range views and there would be views from a limited number of surrounding buildings. The proposal preserves the buildings' character and that of the Cathedral conservation area and the surrounding listed buildings due to the limited views of the panels. The proposals are therefore acceptable and accord with all above policies.

Sustainability

The proposed panels cover a large area and generate 170.23 MWh annually. They would therefore align with national policy objectives to support renewable energy and sustainability

Given the above the proposals are considered to be in accordance with the above policies.

Other Legislative Requirements

Equality Act 2010

Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and; Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations

This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights

conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the recommendation given is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation: Approve

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

1) The proposed development raises no adverse issues in respect of external appearance, glare or the general visual amenity of the area and accords with the requirements of Class J of Part 14 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 as amended.

Therefore, consent is hereby granted in accordance with the following information submitted as part of planning application referenced 143290/P14J/2025:

Location Plan referenced PRW-CDA-ZZ-00-DR-A-PL-3000 Rev P3

Completed Application Form

The roof plan prepared by Solar Edge

The letter from Nexus Planning dated 17 June 2025

The System Review document prepared by Solar Edge

Received by the City Council as local planning authority on 24 June 2025

The Project Report prepared by Van Der Valk

Received by the City Council as local planning authority on 14 July 2025

The roof plan and section prepared by Genfit

Received by the City Council as local planning authority on 15 July 2025

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Manchester Airport Safeguarding Officer
Highway Services
Environmental Health

Nuffield Health, Physiotherapy Centre, Unit 4, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Third Floor, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester, M4 4BE
Ground Floor, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester, M4 4BE
T Mobile 66214, Communication Station On Roof Of, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Fourth Floor, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester, M4 4BE
Basement, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester, M4 4BE
Unit 22 And 23, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
The Printworks, Corporation Street, Manchester, M4 2BS
Unit 14, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Kiosk, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Units 11 And 12, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Unit 3, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
CARGO, Units 5 And 6, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Unit 16 To 17, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Units 2 And 2C, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Unit 2C, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 4BS
Unit 15, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Nuffield Health, Unit 4, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Unit 23A, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Unit 18, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Second Floor, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Unit 20, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Unit 3A, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Unit 1, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Unit 13, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Unit 19, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Unit 1A, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Hard Rock Cafe, The Printworks, Corporation Street, Manchester, M4 2BS
The Cooperative Food Store, Corporation Street, Manchester, M4 4BE
Unit 10, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Flat 902, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 803, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 703, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 701, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 602, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 504, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 501, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 305, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 303, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 205, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 203, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 106, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 103, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Tenpin, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Unit 2A, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
31 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
35 - 39 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ

Flat 403, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 402, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Treetop Adventure Golf, Unit 17A, The Printworks, 7 Dantzic Street, Manchester, M4 2AD
Unit 21 And 22, The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BS
Atana Aparthotel, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 901, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 802, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 801, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 702, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 604, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 603, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 601, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 503, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 502, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 404, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 401, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 304, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 302, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 301, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 204, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 202, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 201, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 105, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 104, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 102, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
Flat 101, The Works, 33 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ
29 Withy Grove, Manchester, M4 2BJ

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Article 4 Direction - City Centre PD Restriction - Class B1(a) To C3
Coal Authority - Development Low Risk - Name: DEVELOPMENT_LOW_RISK_AREA
Conservation Area - Shudehill Conservation Area 1987
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL

