

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 142963/FO/2025
Date registered valid: 20 June 2025
Proposal: Installation of two external air source heat pumps and enclosure
Address: William Temple Church, Robinswood Road, Wythenshawe, M22 0BU
Ward(s): Woodhouse Park Ward

Applicant: Mr Darren Bamford, Diocese of Manchester
Agent (if any): Mrs Lucy M Crowther
Case officer: Ellie Knowles
Tel: 0161 219 6633
Email: ellie.knowles@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve
Date of recommendation: 1 October 2025

Application details

Type of application: Full Application Consent

Development type: Minor Other

Date of site visit: 3 July 2025 & 20 August 2025

Standard consultations:

Printed: 2 July 2025 Expired: 23 July 2025

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 2 July 2025 Expired: 23 July 2025

Site notice

Posted: 3 July 2025 Expired: 24 July 2025

Press advert

Published: 8 July 2025 Expired: 29 July 2025

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building/area

The site concerns the curtilage of William Temple Church, c.1965, a Grade II listed building (1998) designed by George Gaze Pace. Its key characteristics are the blue, red, brown brick elevations surmounted by a dynamic sweeping copper-sheet pitched roof that is punctuated by distinctive rows of vertical dormers, most notably on the front, east-facing roof.

The main entrance has a flat-roof canopy set back from Robinswood Road behind a grassed lawn and fenced enclosure. Its other elevations face onto Simonsway and Metrolink to the north, Summerfield Road to the west and a public footpath to the south. This last elevation which has both single and two-storey additions, is largely obscured from public view by dense vegetation on the church boundary.

On the western elevation there is a small single storey special vestry connected to the church by a recessed porch. Externally, the vestry is within the same design language of the main building, most notably having a steeply pitched roof clad in the same copper sheeting and 2no. vertical copper-clad dormers.

The surrounding area is predominantly characterised by residential properties to the east, south and west of the application site. To the north lies Wythenshawe district centre on the opposite side of Simonsway and Metrolink.



Proposed west elevation of application property and specific area of development (not to scale).

Listed building: Grade II

Conservation area: Not applicable

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

Description of development

Scope of works

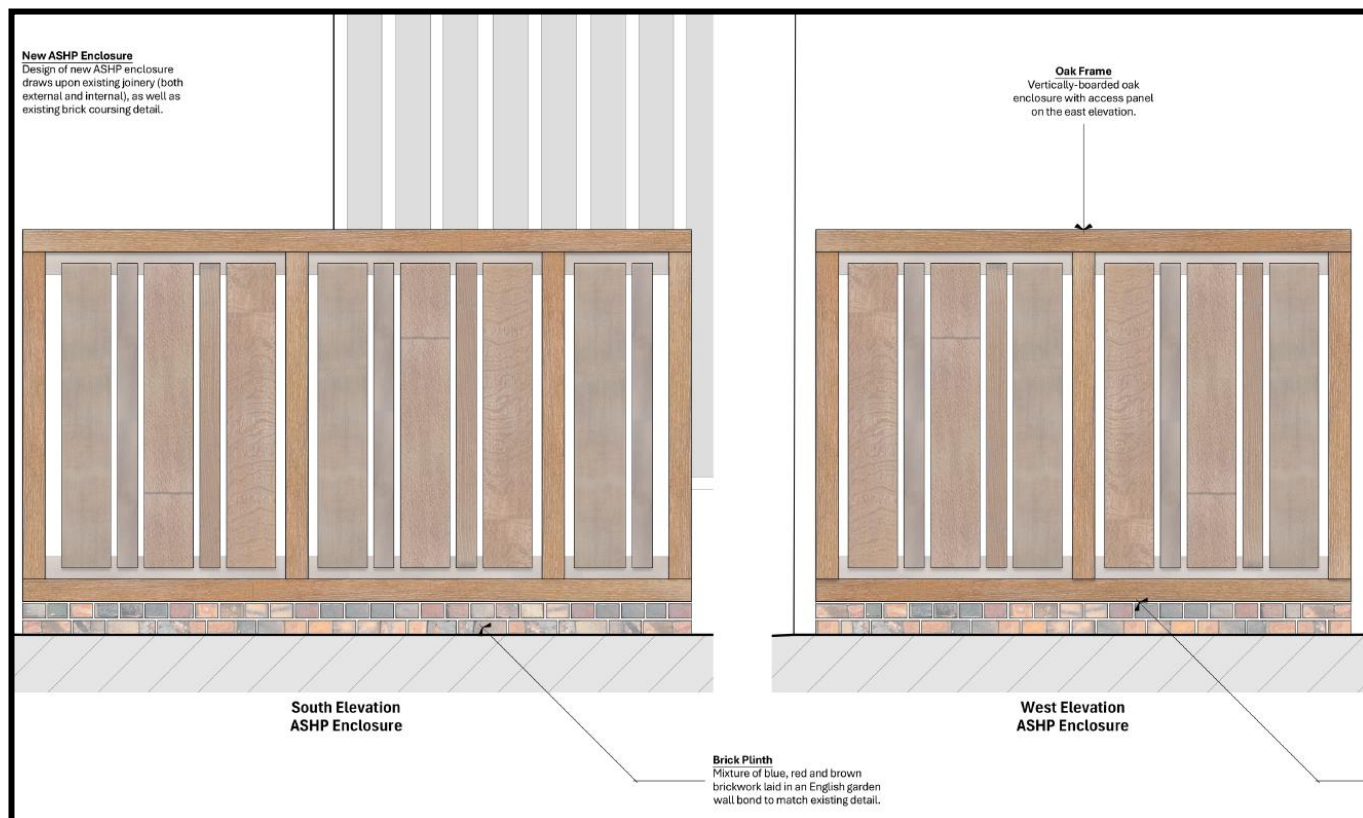
External

The application proposes 2no. 52.45kW ASHP external condenser units on 150mm high concrete bases sited against the south side of the special vestry and its porch that connects to the main church. Their dimensions are 1.7 metres in height x 765 deep x 1.98 metres long.

Following discussion of heritage concerns, the agent submitted a revised proposal showing inclusion of a timber enclosure with matching brickwork plinth to help screen the ASHP.

Internal

William Temple Church is exempt from Listed Building Consent due to Ecclesiastical Exemption. Therefore, the proposed internal heating system renewal works are a matter for the Faculty Application, not a Planning Permission issue.



Elevational details of proposed ASHP enclosure.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Local responses

One letter of representation was received from a local resident raising the following concerns:

- Existing noise impacts from Church (at nighttime) – will ASHPs exacerbate this?

Noise is a material planning consideration which will be addressed in the appraisal.

Consultee responses

Environmental Health – No objections, subject to condition relating to acoustic scheme and verification report.

Relevant Planning History

None

History of negotiations

The planning officer requested that the ASHPs were enclosed in a sympathetically designed screen, to mitigate visual impact on the listed building.

The agent submitted revised plans, 15/08/2025, showing screening and a site meeting was conducted (20/08/2025) with the agent and applicant to discuss the merits of the proposal. The revised application was assessed accordingly.

Local Planning Policies

Places for Everyone (2022-2039) – Places for Everyone is a long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth. It has been published by the GMCA on behalf of the nine districts and took effect and became part of the statutory development plan on March 21, 2024.

The PfE Plan and its policies are now a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. The PfE Plan and its policies must therefore be given full weight in the planning balance.

Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012-2027) - The Core Strategy was adopted on the 11 July 2012 and replaces a large number of policies in Manchester's Unitary Development Plan. Parts of the policies have been superseded by the Places for Everyone Plan.

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) for the City of Manchester (1995) - The Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester was adopted in 1995 and has largely been replaced with the policies contained within the Core Strategy. However, there are a number of policies that are extant.

The relevant **Places for Everyone** policies for this application are as follows:

JP-S1 – Sustainable Development
JP-S2 – Carbon and Energy
JP-P2 – Heritage

The relevant **Core Strategy** policies for this application are as follows:

DM 1 – Development Management
SP 1 – Spatial Principles (partially superseded by PfE)
EN 3 – Heritage (partially superseded by PfE)
EN 4 – Reducing CO₂ Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development
EN 8 – Adaptation to Climate Change (partially superseded by PfE)

The relevant saved **UDP** policies for this application are:

DC19 – Listed Buildings
DC26 – Development and Noise

Historic England Advice Note 18: Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF (December 2024) sets out broad national policies on themes such as housing, historic environment, town centres, design, climate change and the Green Belt. Central to the broad policy direction contained within the NPPF is the notion of sustainable development; development which effectively balances economic, social and environmental factors. The Local Planning Authority consider the following sections relevant to this proposal.

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4 – Decision-making
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

- Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Para 8(c) – The environmental objective of sustainable development is to protect and enhance the natural, built, and historic environment, including adapting to climate change and moving to a low carbon economy.

Para 161 – The planning system should support the transition to net zero and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

Para 167 – Local planning authorities should give significant weight to supporting energy efficiency to existing buildings. Where proposals affect conservation areas, listed buildings or other designated heritage assets, the policies in Chapter 16 should also be applied.

Para 168b - When determining applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon energy developments, local planning authorities should recognise the value that small scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

Para 202 - Heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Para 207 - Local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Para 208 - LPAs should ensure that any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal is avoided or minimised.

Para 210 - In determining applications, LPAs should take account of, the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Para 212 - When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

Para 213 - Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

Para 215 - Proposals of less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should be weighed against the wider public benefits of the proposal.

Para 216 – The effect of a proposal on non-designated heritage assets needs to be considered in assessing an application.

Para 219 - Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance.

Issues

Principle of development:

The submitted application seeks planning permission for installation of two floor mounted air sourced heat pumps and timber enclosure to the southwestern side.

The current heating system would be changed to Air Source Heat, which is considered an energy efficient method to the heat building that would reduce its dependence on fossil fuels. The proposal would support the Authority in its ambitions to become a Zero Carbon city by 2038, reducing the carbon emissions associated with the operation of the building through the provision of on-site renewable electricity generation subject to the ASHPs not compromising the levels of amenity within the surrounding area.

A transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy, complements the Council's citywide estate decarbonisation programme and support for local and national net zero targets. These benefits align with NPPF paras.161, 167, 168(b), and 8(c), Core Strategy policy EN4, Places for Everyone policy JP-S1 and the Council's 2019 Climate Change Action Plan 2025–2030.

As such, the proposal is considered pursuant to policies JP-S1 and JP-S2 Places for Everyone, policies EN3, EN4 and EN8 of the Core Strategy (2012), and would help the Church achieve its energy targets. As such, the principle of development is considered acceptable. However, consideration must be given to the proposal's appearance, impact on the character of the Listed Building, visual amenity of the area, impact on the neighbouring properties' residential amenity and issues raised by way of consultation from relevant interested parties.

Impact on heritage and visual amenity:

The application has been revised to include a timber enclosure, to minimise visual impact through screening.

The scheme is supported by a Heritage Impact Assessment which considers the historic significance of the building and the impact of the proposed works on the historic fabric and heritage value. In summary, it is considered that the proposed works will have less than substantial harm upon the listed building.

The proposed ASHPs and screening enclosure will be sited against the south side of the special vestry and its porch that connects to the main church. This elevation is assessed as of "medium importance, moreover, is considered highly visible from Summerfield Road due to the lack of tree cover along a significant stretch of the boundary. The proposed vegetation clearance around the special vestry will further expose the elevation, increasing the prominence of the development site.

To mitigate visual impact upon the listed building, the ASHPs would feature a bespoke enclosure which would comprise timber vertically boarded joinery, which design inspiration can be found throughout the existing church building, with a brick plinth detailed to match the existing brick tones and bonding pattern. An access panel would be located on the east elevation (the narrowest side, hidden from view) with a 1.5 m clearance provided in front of the ASHPs. The enclosure would measure approximately 1.8m (h) x 3m (w) x 2.5m (d), fully screening the 2no. ASHPs. A material sample condition will be required prior to installation of the enclosure, to ensure a high-quality finish is achieved in this sensitive location.

It is believed that on balance, the proposed works will meet an established need and would still sustain the heritage significance of the listed building. It is considered that less than substantial harm would be caused and on balance when weighed against the public benefits that the proposal will deliver, including reduction in operational carbon cost and transition to renewable energy, the proposed development is considered acceptable and would have minimal impact to the external appearance of the listed building.

Impact on residential amenity:

The application property is set within a predominantly residential area, with the exception of Wythenshawe district centre due north. Nearest residential properties along Summerfield Road (due west) are sited circa 31m distance away from the proposed development.

Installation of 2no. 52.45kW ASHP external condenser units with timber enclosure are proposed to the southern elevation of the special vestry. The proposed equipment is to be located on the western side of the existing building at low level.

Concern has been raised through representation regarding existing noise from the Church. Whilst this is duly noted, this planning application seeks installation of ASHPs and enclosure

only, therefore the current operations and opening hours of the Church are not considered within the remit of this application.

With regards to the proposal, Environmental Health have requested a condition be included to ensure an acoustic scheme and verification report are submitted and agreed in order to confirm the proposed equipment meets with the Council's noise criteria, prior to its first operation.

Subject to full adherence to the aforementioned noise condition, this proposal is considered compliant with saved policy DC26 of the UDP, Policies DM1, SP1 of the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework which seek to protect amenity.

Impact on Highway Safety:

The proposed development would not interfere with the existing staff/visitor parking provision on street, as such is considered acceptable in this regard.

Conclusion:

The proposals are supported, given that harm to the asset has been minimised through selective site location and inclusion of sympathetically designed enclosure. Where it has been identified, it is at the lower end of the less than substantial scale.

Significant public benefits would be delivered enabling the Church, to transition from fossil fuels to clean and sustainable air-sourced heat pumps, whilst preserving the integrity, fabric and character of the heritage asset. The proposal accords with Core Strategy policies EN3, EN4 and EN8 of the Core Strategy, JP-P2 and JP-S2 of Places for Everyone, saved UDP Policy 19.1 and the guidance within Section 16 of the NPPF.

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

Article 35 Declaration

Officers have worked with the applicant/agent in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the application.

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval

1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason - Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the documents labelled:

- 'Existing & Proposed South Elevation', numbered '2507-A PP 01', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 15/08/2025.
- 'Existing & Proposed South Elevation - Vestry', numbered '2507-A PP 02', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 15/08/2025.
- 'Existing & Proposed West Elevation', numbered '2507-A PP 03', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 15/08/2025.
- 'Existing & Proposed West Elevation - Vestry', numbered '2507-A PP 04', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 15/08/2025.
- 'ASHP Enclosure', numbered '2507-A PP 05', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 15/08/2025.
- 'Proposed ASHP Block Plan', numbered '2507-A PP 08', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 01/10/2025.
- Heritage Statement (Prepared by Jenny Wetton Conservation; dated June 2025; received 20/06/2025)

Reason - To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, pursuant to Policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

3) Notwithstanding the details as set out in condition 2 above, prior to installation of the enclosure, elevational drawings of the north and east elevations of the enclosure, alongside samples and specifications of all materials to be used on all external elevations of the ASHP enclosure shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority. For the avoidance of doubt this shall include timber joinery showing finish & colouration and a sample panel of brick work to be erected for inspection and made available to view, including coursing, and mortar mix, profile and finish. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the development is acceptable to the City Council as local planning authority in the interests of the visual amenity of the area within which the site is located, pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012) and saved UDP policy DC19.

4) a) Externally mounted ancillary plant, equipment and servicing shall be selected and/or acoustically treated in accordance with a scheme designed so as to achieve a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level at the nearest noise sensitive location. Prior to commencement of the use hereby approved the scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority in order to secure a reduction in the level of noise emanating from the site. The scheme shall be implemented in full before the use commences or as otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority.

b) Prior to the operation of the scheme a verification report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority to validate that the work undertaken throughout the development conforms to the recommendations and requirements in the approved acoustic report. The report shall also undertake post completion testing to confirm that the noise criteria have been met. Any instances of nonconformity with the recommendations in the verification report shall be detailed along with any measures required to be undertaken prior to operation of the scheme to ensure compliance with the agreed noise criteria.

Reason - To minimise the impact of the development and to prevent a general increase in pre-existing background noise levels around the site, pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012) and saved UDP policy DC26.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Environmental Health
Heritage & Urban Design

70 Robinswood Road, Manchester, M22 0BX
68 Robinswood Road, Manchester, M22 0BX
33 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AE
29 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AE
67 Robinswood Road, Manchester, M22 0BU
37 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AE
31 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AE
27 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AE
44 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AF
42 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AF
40 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AF
38 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AF
36 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AF
32 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AF
35 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AE
25 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AE
65 Robinswood Road, Manchester, M22 0BU
62 Robinswood Road, Manchester, M22 0BU
34 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AF
23 Summerfield Road, Manchester, M22 1AE
69 Robinswood Road, Manchester, M22 0BU
66 Robinswood Road, Manchester, M22 0BU
64 Robinswood Road, Manchester, M22 0BU
58 Robinswood Road, Manchester, M22 0BU
60 Robinswood Road, Manchester, M22 0BU

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: SOUTH AREA