

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 143906/VO/2025

Date registered valid: 10 September 2025

Proposal: City Council Development for temporary change of use of public open space for the purpose of a Christmas Market for a period of 46 days.

Address: New Cathedral Street, Manchester

Ward(s): Deansgate Ward

Applicant: Robert Hutchinson Manchester City Council

Agent (if any):

Case officer: Michael Pearson
Tel: 0161 219 2735
Email: michael.pearson@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve

Date of recommendation: 09/10/2025

Application details

Type of application: Regulation 3 Consent

Development type: Change of use

Date of site visit:

Standard consultations:

Printed: 11 September 2025 Expired: 2 October 2025

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 11 September 2025 Expired: 2 October 2025

Site notice

Posted: 16 September 2025 Expired: 7 October 2025

Press advert

Published: 16 September 2025 Expired: 7 October 2025

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

The application relates to New Cathedral Street, a pedestrianised road, providing access to Exchange Square to the north and St Mary's Gate, Exchange Street and St Anns Square to the south. The street is wide, flanked by shops on both sides and is paved in York Stone Pavings. Existing street furniture consists of street lamps and public bins. The street slopes to the south.

Listed building: Not applicable

Conservation area: Not applicable

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

Description of area

The neighbouring area lies within the heart of the City Centre and the Primary Shopping Area. Due to this, built development within the area is populated by properties in a variety of commercial uses, including cafes, restaurants, shops and drinking establishments. To the north of the application site lies the Cathedral Conservation Area and to the south the St Anns Square Conservation Area. The age and design of properties in the street scene is varied, with older buildings being found to the north and south of the site in the aforementioned conservation areas, this includes the Royal Exchange, Sinclairs Oyster Bar and the Old Wellington Inn, all Grade II listed. New Cathedral itself is populated by commercial properties dating from the early 2000s, with said properties featuring large elements of glazing and contemporary cladding.

Description of development

The application seeks planning permission for the temporary change of use of public open space for Christmas Markets for a period of 45 days.

The proposed period the markets would be situated on site for would be from 07/11/2025 – 22/12/2025. The proposed hours of opening would be from 10:00 – 21:00 seven days a week.

22no market stalls would be situated on site that would then be capped by a series of catering trailers at the northern end of the site, and a bar structure with outdoor seating to the south. 2no generators would provide power to the aforementioned units and would be situated within the centre of the site.

Facilities for waste and recycling storage would be in a refuse trailer on Cathedral Street.

Planning History

A high number of planning applications are on record for the application site, the most relevant of which are shown below:

140952/VO/2024 – City Council Development – Creation of Christmas Markets and associated infrastructure for a period of 45 days – Approved November 2024.

138484/VO/2023 – City Council Development – Temporary change of use of public open space for the purpose of a Christmas Market for a period of 43 days – Approved December 2023.

125161/VO/2019 – CITY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT for temporary change of use of public open space for the purpose of a Christmas Market for a period of 43 days – Approved November 2019.

121369/VO/2018 – City Council Development for the temporary change of use of public open space for the purpose of a Christmas Market from 9 November 2018 to 21 December 2018 – Approved November 2018.

117678/VO/2017 – City Council Development for the temporary change of use of public open space for the purpose of a Christmas Market from 10 November 2017 to 21 December 2017 – Approved November 2017.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Publicity – A site notice and press notice were issued. Neighbouring properties were notified of the proposal by letter. No representations were received.

Counter Terrorism Policing North West – No objection received. Greater Manchester Police noted within their response that they had liaised with the Counter Terrorism Security Adviser and that they had no objection.

Environmental Health – No objection.

Greater Manchester Police – No objection.

Highways – No objection.

Transport for Greater Manchester/Metrolink – No objection.

Policy

The Places for Everyone Plan – Joint Development Plan Document, for nine of the ten boroughs which make up Greater Manchester adopted on 21st of March 2024:

- Policy JP-Strat1 – Core Growth Area
- Policy JP-Strat2 – City Centre
- Policy JP-P2 – Heritage
- Policy JP-C5 – Streets for All

The Manchester Core Strategy – Development Plan Document 2012-2027 (“the Core Strategy”) was adopted by the City Council on the 11th July 2012:

- Policy SP1 – Spatial Principles
- Policy CC1 – Primary Economic Development Focus (City Centre and Fringe)
- Policy CC2 – Retail
- Policy CC4 – Visitors – Tourism, Culture and Leisure
- Policy CC9 – Design and Heritage
- Policy CC10 – A Place for Everyone
- Policy C10 – Leisure and the Evening Economy
- Policy EN1 – Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas
- Policy EN3 – Heritage
- Policy EN19 – Waste
- Policy DM1 – Development Management

Saved Unitary Development Plan for Manchester – The following saved UDP Policies are of relevance to this application:

- Policy DC10 – Food and Drink Uses
- Policy DC18 – Conservation Areas
- Policy DC19 – Listed Buildings
- Policy DC26 – Development and Noise

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Chapter 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
- Chapter 9 – Promoting Sustainable Transport
- Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Chapter 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Other Legislative Requirements

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

National Planning Policy for Waste

Issues

Principle of the Development

The proposal would see the temporary siting of Christmas Markets for a period of 45 days. The provision of such markets is a key source of tourism and economic growth for Manchester City Centre during the festive period that help increase the profile of the City. Whilst permanent siting of such structures on a pedestrianised road would not ordinarily be supported, as the proposals are only temporary, it is considered the development accords with Places for Everyone Plan Policies JP-Strat1 and JP-Start2, Core Strategy Policies SP1, CC1, CC2, CC4, C10 and DM1, in principle, subject to the matters discussed below.

Visual Amenity and Heritage

The siting of market stalls along Cathedral Street would not be supported should the proposals be permanent. However, as the development is temporary and ancillary storage areas, including that of the generators would be screened from view, it is considered any impact caused to the appearance of the street scene or neighbouring heritage assets would be minor in nature and would be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. On this basis, the development complies with Places for Everyone Plan Policy JP-P2, Core Strategy Policies CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies DC18 and DC19, the National Planning Policy Framework, and the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Residential Amenity

The application site is located within a key thoroughfare of the City Centre and Primary Shopping Area, where background noise levels are high at most times, and the number of nearby residential dwellings is low. The proposed development would operate from 10:00 till 21:00 which are not considered to be unreasonable hours given its location. Environmental Health do not object to the proposals. The development is therefore acceptable in this regard and accords with Core Strategy Policy DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies DC10 and DC26, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Crime and Disorder / Public Safety

The markets would see the change of use of a public footway to that of Christmas Markets, which would see food and alcohol consumed on site, and would be likely to attract a high number of visitors. As part of these proposals, general best practice measures would be in place, this includes the use of megaphones to relay public messages, on site security and first aid, emergency evacuation plans. No objection has been received by the Counter Terrorism Policing North West unit. Greater Manchester Police do not object to the proposal and do note that after liaising with the Counter Terrorism Security Adviser and that they had no objection. On this basis, the proposal is acceptable in this regard and accords with Core Strategy Policy DM1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Accessibility

The layout of the development would be so that ample room is left either side of the development to allow for full wheelchair access. As such, the proposal is acceptable in this regard and accords with Places for Everyone Plan Policy JP-C5, Core Strategy Policies C10 and DM1, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highway Safety

The application site, as previously mentioned, is a pedestrianised street that can only be accessed by services vehicles. The submitted supporting information notes that bump-in and bump-out trader's vehicle access to New Cathedral Street will be restricted to outside local business trading times. During business hours no vehicular access through the site will be permitted, deliveries will then take place overnight between 10pm and 8am. Highways do not object to the development. On this basis, the proposal is acceptable in regard to its impact on Highway Safety and therefore complies with Core Strategy Policy DM1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Waste Management

Proposed waste management arrangements would see the transportation of waste to a storage area located on Cathedral Street. Whilst typically the transportation of waste and recycling to a

separate storage area would be considered unacceptable, given how the development is temporary in nature, the development is acceptable in this instance. Therefore, the proposal complies with Core Strategy Policies EN19 and DM1, and the National Planning Policy for Waste.

Conclusion

In light of the above and subject to appropriate planning conditions, it is considered that the development is acceptable and is therefore in accordance with Places for Everyone Plan Policies JP-Strat1, JP-Strat2, JP-P2 and JP-C5, Core Strategy Policies SP1, CC1, CC2, CC4, CC9, CC10, C10, EN1, EN3 and DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies DC10, DC18, DC19 and DC26, the National Planning Policy for Waste, the National Planning Policy Framework, and the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. On this basis the application is recommended for approval.

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 in determining this application by assessing the proposal against relevant planning policies and all material considerations, identifying matters of concern with the proposal and discussing those with the applicant/agent. In this instance negotiation has been able to successfully resolve the identified concerns and issues.

Conditions to be attached to decision for approval

1) The permission hereby granted is for a limited period only, expiring on 22 December 2025 and the use comprising the development for which permission is hereby temporarily granted is required to be discontinued on the date of expiry. The site shall be made good within one month of the temporary permission expiring.

Reason - The use hereby approved is of a temporary nature only and pursuant to Core Strategy Policies SP1, CC1, CC2, CC4, CC9, EN3 and DM1 and saved Unitary Development Plan policies DC18, DC19 and DC26.

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

- o MCC-XX-DR-B-011: New Cathedral Street Proposed Layout Plan

- o MCC-XX-DR-B-003: Location Plan - New Cathedral Street
- o Design and Access Statement Manchester Christmas Markets 2025 (Prepared by Manchester City Council; Dated August 2025).
- o Stage V Generator 60kVa Spec Sheet (Prepared by John F Hunt; Received 09/10/2025)

All stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 10/09/2025, unless specified otherwise.

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. Pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework

3) The approved use shall operate in accordance with the following hours:

10.00am to 21.00pm (including bank holidays)

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential accommodation, pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy

4) The generators used at the market site shall be Stage V 60kVa Generators provided by John F Hunt Power, as outlined in the approved specification (Received by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority, 09/10/2024).

Reason - In interests of residential amenity in order to reduce noise and general disturbance in accordance with policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy and saved policies DC10.1 and DC26 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services
Environmental Health
Greater Manchester Police
Transport For Greater Manchester
Counter Terrorism Policing North West (CTPNW)

Flat 301, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 806, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 702, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 501, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 801, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 104, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
ZARA, 1 New Cathedral Street, Manchester, M1 1AD
Harvey Nichols Group, The Shambles, New Cathedral Street, Manchester, M1 1AD
Flat 308, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 1002, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 605, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Apartment 807, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 406, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 108, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 708, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 1201, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 209, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 1001, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 505, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 207, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 804, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 901, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Cathedral Visitors Centre, 10 Cateaton Street, Manchester, M3 1SQ
1 Exchange Square, Manchester, M3 1BD
Flat 204, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Unit 5, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 704, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 606, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 307, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 402, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 208, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 706, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 803, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 403, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Top Flat, 6 Cateaton Street, Manchester, M3 1SQ
10 Market Street, Manchester, M1 1PT
Unit 2, The Shambles, New Cathedral Street, Manchester, M1 1AD
Unit 8, New Cathedral Street, Manchester, M1 1AD
Flat 604, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Apartment 906, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 304, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 805, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 107, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 105, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 707, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 302, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ

Flat 202, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 1004, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
4 Market Street, Manchester, M1 1PT
6 Market Street, Manchester, M1 1PT
Unit 6, New Cathedral Street, Manchester, M1 1AD
UGG, 3 New Cathedral Street, Manchester, M1 1AD
Flat 507, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 503, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 1101, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 808, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 206, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Marks And Spencer, 7 - 17 Market Street, Manchester, M1 1PT
Apartment 109, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 106, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 408, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Unit 3, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 506, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 601, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 602, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Unit 4, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 603, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 303, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 404, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
4 - 8 Cateaton Street, Manchester, M3 1SQ
3 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7EE
BOSS, 11 New Cathedral Street, Manchester, M1 1AD
Flat 1104, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 305, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 508, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 405, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 110, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 203, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 703, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 705, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 201, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 502, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
1 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7EE
2 Market Street, Manchester, M1 1PT
18 Market Street, Manchester, M1 1PT
Flat 210, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 905, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 407, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 101, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Unit 5, The Shambles, New Cathedral Street, Manchester, M1 1AD
Unit 4, New Cathedral Street, Manchester, M1 1AD
Unit 7, The Shambles, New Cathedral Street, Manchester, M1 1AD
Flat 701, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 102, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 504, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 401, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 607, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 205, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 103, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 1103, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ

Flat 1202, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
8 Market Street, Manchester, M1 1PT
5 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7EE
Unit 1, 19 New Cathedral Street, Manchester, M1 1AD
15 New Cathedral Street, Manchester, M1 1AD
Flat 306, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ
Flat 904, 1 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 1AZ

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - City Centre PD Restriction - Class B1(a) To C3
Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Coal Authority - Development Low Risk - Name: DEVELOPMENT_LOW_RISK_AREA
Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL