

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 142657/FO/2025
Date registered valid: 9 April 2025
Proposal: Installation of 3 No. new ASHPs to the roof of Hexagon Tower
Address: Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
Ward(s): Crumpsall Ward

Applicant: Mr Jonathan Bostock Colour Synthesis Solutions Ltd
Agent (if any): Mr Nathan Pearce Farrar Bamforth Architecture Ltd
Case officer: Katie Raw
Tel: 0161 234 4164
Email: katie.raw@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve
Date of recommendation: 30 May 2025

Application details

Type of application: Full Application Consent

Development type: Minor Other

Date of site visit: 30 April 2025

Standard consultations:

Printed: 23 April 2025 Expired: 15 May 2025

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 23 April 2025 Expired: 15 May 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: No

Tree Preservation Order: No

The application site relates to Hexagon Tower within the north Manchester ward of Crumpsall. The application site relates to a large 13 storey tower and associated two storey floorspace bounded by Mill Brow to the north, Delaunays Road and Crumpsall Vale to the South. The building is occupied by a range of businesses associated with the science sector and is effectively a multi-let science park comprising a number of laboratories, office space and machine halls. The two-storey element is enclosed at roof level by a parapet and guard rail with the roof incorporating a number of visitor parking spaces accessed via a ramp off Mill Brow. On the opposite side of Crumpsall Vale is a large, surface level car park for visitors which is flanked by the River Irk. The host building forms a landmark feature in the area and could be classed as good example of brutalist architecture with the main tower incorporating a series of windows to provide a honeycomb effect, with the exterior clad in white coloured mosaic tiles.

The applicant site relates to the 'East Machine Hall Roof' which is visible from Mill Brow. At the time of the site visit, development for an AHU could be seen on site, as well as several ASHPs and air-conditioning units.

Description of area

The surrounding area is mixed with residential surrounding the applicant site, as well as commercial uses including the industrial estate to the west and North Manchester General Hospital to the south.

Description of development

The current application seeks installation of 3 No. new ASHPs to the roof of Hexagon Tower. The 3no. ASHPs would be located on the East Machine Hall roof and would be sited alongside development which has been subject to the approved application of 139679/FO/2024 and the subsequent application of 142546/JO/2025 which at the time of preparing the report is pending consideration.

The 3no. ASHPs would sit in close proximity to several other ASHPs/ air conditioning units but the existing structures do not benefit from consent.

Each ASHP would have approximate dimensions of 1020mm wide x 13500mm high x 417mm deep. The ASHPs to be installed would be a Monobloc ASHP and the product specification has been provided. The product of which would be a PUZ-HWM140YHA (-BS) Ecodan R32.

At the time of the site visit, it appeared as though 1 of the 3 ASHPs subject to this application had been installed at the site.

Negotiations during the course of the Application

Discussions took place with the agent as a separate 142546/JO/2025 application is pending consideration at the applicant site.

The LPA considered the current application could be determined without issues identified within the 142546/JO/2025 application being resolved.

Further Planning History

142546/JO/2025-Variation of condition no.2 (specified plans) attached to planning permission reference 139679/FO/2024 to enable the air handling unit and associated ductwork to roof to be relocated, changed in size and incorporate a supporting structure.
Application currently pending consideration.

CDN/24/0739-Discharge of condition 3a (External Plant and Equipment) from planning approval reference 139679/FO/2024.
Approved 4 October 2024.

CDN/22/0177-Discharge of conditions 3 (materials) and 4 (construction management plan) attached to planning permission referenced 129740/FO/2021.
Approved 15.08.2022.

129740/FO/2021-Installation of over-cladding and replacement of windows.
Approved 22 June 2021.

120352/FO/2018- Resurfacing the flat roof areas of the east and west machine hall parts of the building together with the installation of replacement cladding to the parapets of the roof and replacement glazing in the east and west machine hall wings of the building.
Approved 23.07.2018.

119548/JO/2018-Application to vary condition number 2 (specified plans) attached to previously approved permission 117019/FO/2017 to allow for changes to the entrance canopy.

Approved 30.05.2018.

CDN/18/0140-Application to discharge conditions 7 (vehicle tracking), 10 (in bound barrier system), 11 (travel plan pre occupation element only) and 12 (car park management) attached to approved application 117019/FO/2017.

Approved 11.05.2018.

117019/FO/2017- Seventh Floor- Change of use of seventh floor (Class B1) to form satellite Renal Dialysis Unit (Class D1) including ground floor entrance works, welcome structure and bin store together with reconfiguration of existing parking.

Approved 8 September 2017.

Further planning history exists for the site prior to 2017.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Local Residents

Local residents were consulted and no responses were received.

Environmental Health

Environmental Health were consulted and requested a condition be attached to any approval relating to the acoustic treatment of externally mounted ancillary plant, equipment and servicing.

Issues

POLICY

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

The document sets out the Government's Planning Policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development in terms, "For plan-making" and "For decision-taking", (paragraph 11).

Paragraph 8 - Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives): a) an economic objective, b) a social, and c) an environmental objective.

The following specific policies are considered to be particularly relevant to the proposed development:

Chapter 8. Promoting healthy and communities

Chapter 12. Achieving well-designed places

The Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012-2027 ("the Core Strategy") was adopted by the City Council on 11th July 2012. Updated March 2024 following the adoption of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan.

The Core Strategy is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework. It replaces significant elements of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as the document that sets out the long term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development. Of relevance are:

Policy DM1 (Development Management)

Policy SP1 (Spatial Principles)

Policy EN1 (Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas)

Policy EN4 (Reducing CO2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development).

Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies

Large elements of the UDP have been superseded by the Core Strategy. The following saved policies are of relevance in the consideration of this application:

DC26.1 states the Council intends to use the development control process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in, or visiting, the City. In giving effect to this intention, the Council will consider both:

- a. the effect of new development proposals which are likely to be generators of noise; and
- b. the implications of new development being exposed to existing noise sources which are effectively outside planning control.

DC26.2 states new noise sensitive developments (including large scale changes of use of existing land or buildings) such as housing, schools, hospitals, or similar activities, will be permitted subject to their not being in locations which would expose them to high noise levels from existing uses or operations, unless the effects of the noise can realistically be reduced. In giving effect to this policy, the council will take account both of noise exposure at the time of receiving a planning application and of any increase that may reasonably be expected in the foreseeable future.

DC26.4 states where the council believes that an existing noise source might result in an adverse impact upon a proposed new development, or where a new proposal might generate potentially unacceptable levels of noise, it will in either case require the applicant to provide an assessment of the likely impact and of the measures he proposes to deal satisfactorily with it. Such measures might include the following

- a) engineering solutions, including reduction of noise at source, improving sound insulation of sensitive buildings or screening by purpose-built barriers
- b) layout solutions, including consideration of the distance between the source of the noise and the buildings or land affected by it and screening by natural barriers or other buildings or noncritical rooms within a building; and
- c) administrative steps, including limiting the operating times of the noise source, restricting activities allowed on the site or specifying an acceptable noise limit. Any or all these factors will be considered appropriate for inclusion in conditions on any planning permission

DC26.5 states the council will control noise levels by requiring, where necessary, high levels of noise insulation in new development as well as noise barriers where this is appropriate.

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

The policies of relevance are:

JP- S1- Sustainable Development

JP- S2- Carbon and Energy

JP-S6- Clean Air

ISSUES

Principle of Development

The submitted application seeks planning permission for installation of 3 No. new ASHPs to the roof of Hexagon Tower.

The proposed 3no. ASHPs would support the heat system for the building and would continue to 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. As such, the proposal is considered pursuant to policies EN4 of the Core Strategy (2012) and would help the applicant 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 visual amenity of the area, impact on the neighbouring properties' residential amenity and issues raised by way of consultation from relevant interested parties.

Visual/ Residential Amenity

The 3no. ASHPs proposed would be seen in the context of several pieces of ASHP/ air conditioning equipment sited along East Hall Machine (although it is noted none of which benefit from consent at the current time). Given the commercial nature of the building and the existing use of this section of the East Hall Machine roof, the proposed development would not appear out of context with the immediate surroundings.

Given the equipment would be small in nature, be of proportions appropriate to its use and given it would be set away from the road of Mill Brow, it is not considered to give rise to any overbearing feature to such residential properties opposite Mill Brow or to passersby.

Further, it is noted sections of soft landscaping are sited along the bank of land close to Mill Brow, which would help to mitigate some visual harm from the proposal.

The main amenity concern from the proposed ASHP is the potential noise output, given the proposed number of ASHPs in one location. To overcome this concern and in the interests of residential amenity to the surrounding residential units, Environmental Health have requested a condition requiring a noise assessment of the plant to be submitted and approved prior to installation, pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy and policy DC26 of the UDP.

Overall, the benefits of carbon reduction for Hexagon Tower is considered to outweigh any harm to visual amenity. It is considered the proposed development is acceptable in terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Manchester's Core Strategy, including policies DM1 and EN4, as well as saved Unitary Development Plan policy DC26.

Design and Appearance

Heat pump product specifications have been provided during the course of the application and would relate to a Monobloc ASHP and the product specification has been provided for review. The product of which would be a PUZ-HWM140YHA (-BS) Ecodan R32. The ASHPs are utilitarian in appearance, and a design which benefits its function, similar to that of large air-conditioning units.

Each ASHP would have approximate dimensions of 1020mm wide x 13500mm high x 417mm deep. Such individual units are not considered to be overly large or bulky and so appropriate in form.

Therefore, the design and appearance of this element of works is considered pursuant to Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy.

Noise

Given the potential noise emissions from the 3no. ASHPs, Environmental Health were consulted on the application and requested an external plant condition should be attached to the decision notice of any approval granted.

Given the inclusion of the acoustic condition, the proposed installations are not considered to give rise to any harmful impacts with regards to noise and disturbance in accordance with policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

Existing Development on the Site

Within the East Machine Hall, there are several existing external plant- ASHPs/ air conditioning equipment installed with no planning history found for such development. It is acknowledged that this application relates to the 3no. ASHPs only. Given the building is occupied by several different units each tenant have installed such equipment separately. Given the existing development is not within the applicant's ownership, any approval granted from this application would relate to the 3no. ASHPs only. An informative to this effect would be placed on any approval granted to ensure no consent is granted for any other equipment on the site.

Similarly, any approval granted would relate to the 3no. ASHP only and not to the AHU shown on the plans that is currently subject to the variation application of 142546/JO/2025. The wording within the decision notice would reflect this accordingly.

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

The proposal was assessed with regards to policies outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework, Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies, Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan and other material considerations. In this instance officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner and appropriate conditions would be attached to any approval granted.

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

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 following drawings and documents:

-Application Form, stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 9 April 2025.

-Drawing- Proposed- ASHP'S General Arrangement, numbered DR-A-5711 P02, stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 9 April 2025. The works approved solely relate to the 3no. ASHPs and no other works shown on the plan.

-Drawing- Location Plan, numbered DR-A-5712 P02, stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 9 April 2025.

-Supporting Information- Monobloc Air Source Heat Pump, stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 9 April 2025.

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

3) 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 the first use of the hereby approved development a 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.

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 non-conformity 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 Policy DM1 in the Manchester Core Strategy and Saved UDP Policy DC26.

Informatives

- 1) This approval relates only to the 3 no. ASHPs as identified in orange on the approved plans and does not confer planning consent for any other existing ASHPs/ air conditioning units on the site nor does it confer consent for any other Air Handling Unit shown on the approved plans.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Environmental Health

Flat A, 1 Raysonhill Drive, Manchester, M9 8PW
Ground Floor, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
First Floor West, Machine Hall, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
Ground Floor East, Machine Hall, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
2 Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8FW
Fifth Floor, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
Eighth Floor, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
12 Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8FW
Flat B, 12 Raysonhill Drive, Manchester, M9 8PW
Flat 9, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
Flat 5, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
First Floor, East Machine Hall Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
Second Floor, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
Sixth Floor, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
Eleventh Floor, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
130 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8FH
24 Blackley New Road, Manchester, M9 8DB
40 Blackley New Road, Manchester, M9 8DB
Flat 7, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
Room 006 On Tenth Floor, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
Fujifilm Pt 7th - 9th Floors, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
East Machine Hall Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
6 Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8FW
First Floor, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
Basement, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
First Floor, West Machine Hall Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
134 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8FH
26 Blackley New Road, Manchester, M9 8DB
42 Blackley New Road, Manchester, M9 8DB
2 Hexagon Close, Manchester, M9 8RN
3 Hexagon Close, Manchester, M9 8RN
Flat E, 12 Raysonhill Drive, Manchester, M9 8PW
Flat 3, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
Flat 1, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
Flat 11, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
7 Hexagon Close, Manchester, M9 8RN
Flat D, 1 Raysonhill Drive, Manchester, M9 8PW
Flat B, 1 Raysonhill Drive, Manchester, M9 8PW
132 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8FH
6 Hexagon Close, Manchester, M9 8RN
1 Hexagon Close, Manchester, M9 8RN
10 Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8FW
Flat D, 12 Raysonhill Drive, Manchester, M9 8PW
107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
31 Blackley New Road, Manchester, M9 8ES
1 Imperial Way, Manchester, M9 8FE
3 Imperial Way, Manchester, M9 8FE
1 Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
Tenth Floor, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
30 Blackley New Road, Manchester, M9 8DB

4 Hexagon Close, Manchester, M9 8RN
 Flat F, 12 Raysonhill Drive, Manchester, M9 8PW
 9 Hexagon Close, Manchester, M9 8RN
 Flat 10, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
 Flat 6, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
 Flat 8, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
 Ground Floor, West Machine Hall Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
 Fourth Floor, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
 Third Floor, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
 Lubrizol Part Tenth Floor, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
 136 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8FH
 34 Blackley New Road, Manchester, M9 8DB
 36 Blackley New Road, Manchester, M9 8DB
 Flat 14, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
 Flat 16, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
 Flat 12, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
 Flat E, 1 Raysonhill Drive, Manchester, M9 8PW
 Flat C, 1 Raysonhill Drive, Manchester, M9 8PW
 MFT Renal Satellite Unit, Seventh Floor, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
 Avecia Bst - Gnd Flrs, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
 Computer Centre, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
 8 Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8FW
 4 Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8FW
 5 Imperial Way, Manchester, M9 8FE
 32 Blackley New Road, Manchester, M9 8DB
 38 Blackley New Road, Manchester, M9 8DB
 1 Bottomley Side, Manchester, M9 8EZ
 Flat 13, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
 Flat 15, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
 Flat 2, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
 Flat 4, 107 Old Market Street, Manchester, M9 8QN
 5 Hexagon Close, Manchester, M9 8RN
 Flat F, 1 Raysonhill Drive, Manchester, M9 8PW
 Ground Floor West, Machine Hall, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
 Ground And First Floor West, Machine Hall, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
 Ninth Floor, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
 West Machine Hall Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
 Ground Floor, East Machine Hall Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
 28 Blackley New Road, Manchester, M9 8DB
 2 Bottomley Side, Manchester, M9 8EP
 Flat A, 12 Raysonhill Drive, Manchester, M9 8PW
 Machine Hall, Crumpsall Vale, Manchester, M9 8GQ
 Flat C, 12 Raysonhill Drive, Manchester, M9 8PW

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
 Article 4 Direction - North Manchester PD Restriction - Class B1(a) To C3
 Coal Authority - Development Low Risk - Name: DEVELOPMENT_LOW_RISK_AREA
 Flood Zones Type 2 (low to medium risk) -
 Historic Landfill Site 250m Buffer -

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