18 June 2025

Planning Department
Growth and Development
Manchester City Council
PO Box 532
Manchester
M60 2LA

Dear Sir / Madam

PRIOR APPROVAL APPLICATION UNDER CLASS J, PART 14 OF SCHEDULE 2 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2015

DNATA CITY NORTH, 2 PINFOLD LANE, MANCHESTER AIRPORT, MANCHESTER, M90 5XR

Introduction

On behalf of our client, dnata Ltd, please find enclosed an application for prior approval under the terms of the above Order, seeking a determination as to whether prior approval is required for the installation of solar PV equipment (other than microgeneration thermal or PV equipment) on the roof of the cargo facility (Dnata City North).

The site comprises of an extensive storage and distribution building (Use Class B8) with access off Pinfold Lane and existing hardstanding. The solar PV equipment to be installed on the roof will provide a renewable energy resource for the cargo facility to continue carrying out its operations in relation to Manchester Airport in a more sustainable manner.

This application falls under Class J(c) of the order, and as such requires a determination of prior approval from the Local Planning Authority, with regard to external appearance and design and matters of glare impact on neighbouring land/uses.

It is considered that all other elements of the proposals also comply with the requirements of Class J and are covered for completeness below.

Class J Prior Approval Submission

This prior approval application comprises the following documentation:

1. Completed application form.
2. This Planning Statement providing a written description of the proposed development.
3. Completed CIL Form 1
4. Glint and Glare Assessment (January 2025) - prepared by Pagerpower
5. PV System Specification Sheet – prepared by Inspired Energy Solutions
6. Existing Site Layout (Drawing No. 019487-RPS-SI-XX-DR-A-7000) – Produced by RPS Group
7. Proposed Block/Roof Plan – Produced by Inspired
8. Other Drawings – produced by FK Group.
    - Existing Roof Plan – Drawing No. C3353-0001
    - Sides Elevation Plan – Drawing No. C3353-0003
    - Rear Elevation Plan – Drawing No. C3353-0004

- Front Elevation Plan – Drawing No. C3353-0005

Class J prior approval provisions

Under Schedule 2, Part 14, Class J (installation or alteration etc of solar equipment on non-domestic premises) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, development consisting of the installation of solar PV equipment (other than microgeneration thermal or PV equipment) on the roof of a building constitutes 'permitted development' under Class J(c), provided that a number of criteria are satisfied and subject to associated conditions.

This application is submitted in accordance with the provisions of this part of the GPDO and accordingly this Statement and associated documentation appraises the proposed installation against the relevant criteria and associated conditions.

Description of the application site

The application site measures approximately 2.51 hectares in area, comprising of an extensive warehouse associated with air freight (Dnata City North) and surrounded by hardstanding including an HGV delivery area to the front and rear. The Site is accessible from Pinfold Lane, with an area of parking to the north and north-west of the Site. The Site is positioned to the south-east of Pinfold Lane. Figure 1 below identifies the approximate red line boundary of the Site.

The roof of the building is dual pitched, providing four separate roof planes. The slopes of the roof are at an 8-degree inclination.

This application and determination as to whether prior approval is required relates only to the proposed solar PV panels on the roof of the Dnata City North building.

Figure 1: Approximate red-line boundary

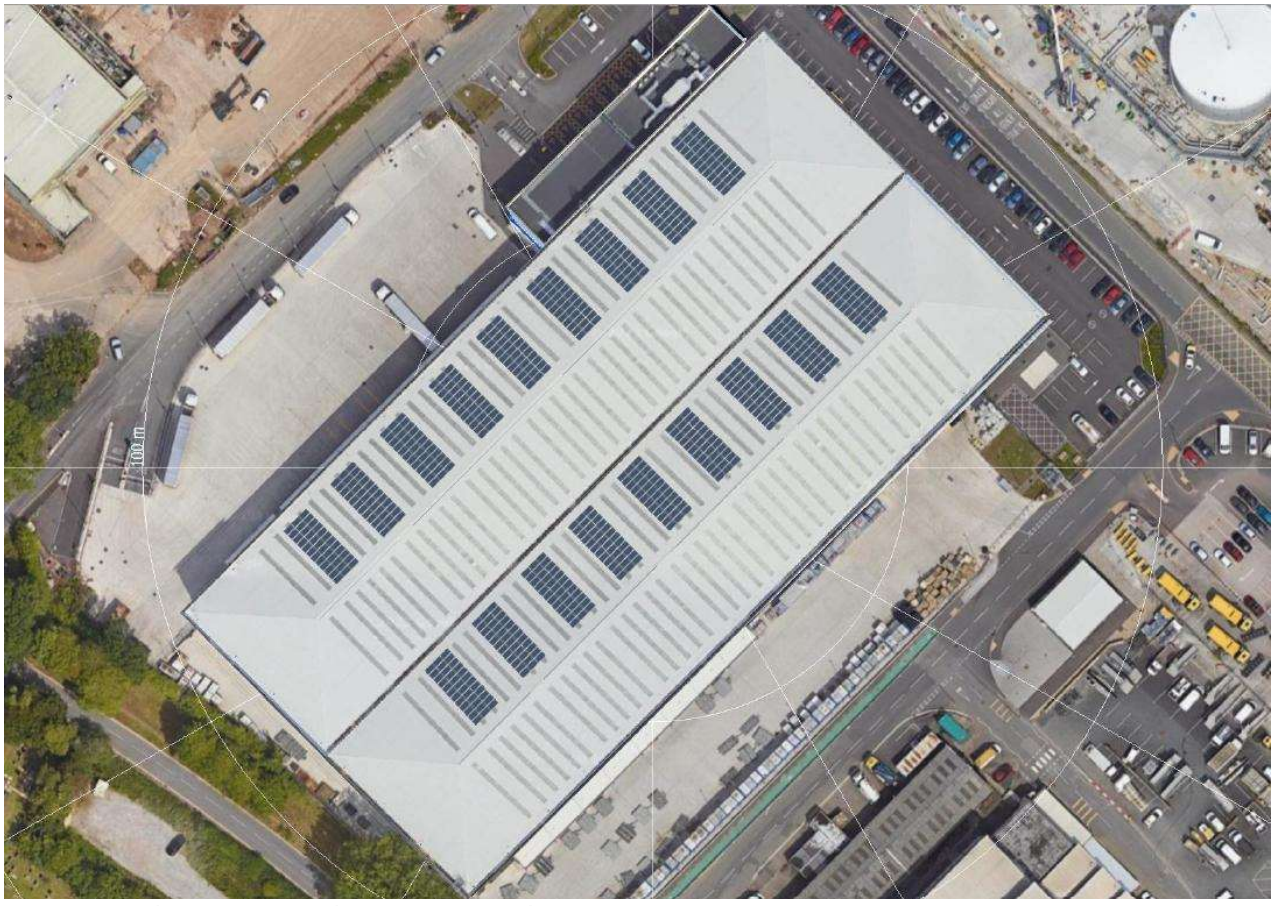


Source: Google Maps (2025); Annotated by Union4 Planning

Proposed Development

The proposals comprise the installation of 1,462.3sqm of solar PV panels on the two north west slopes of the roof of the Dnata City North building (731.15 sqm of solar PV panels on each slope respectively). As such, the proposal comprises a total of 648 PV modules. 3 inverters will be provided within the building as part of the proposal which will convert the direct current (DC) electricity generated by the solar panels into alternating current (AC) electricity. Figure 2 below shows the proposed placement of the solar PV panels on the roof.

Figure 2: Proposed Roof Plan Layout

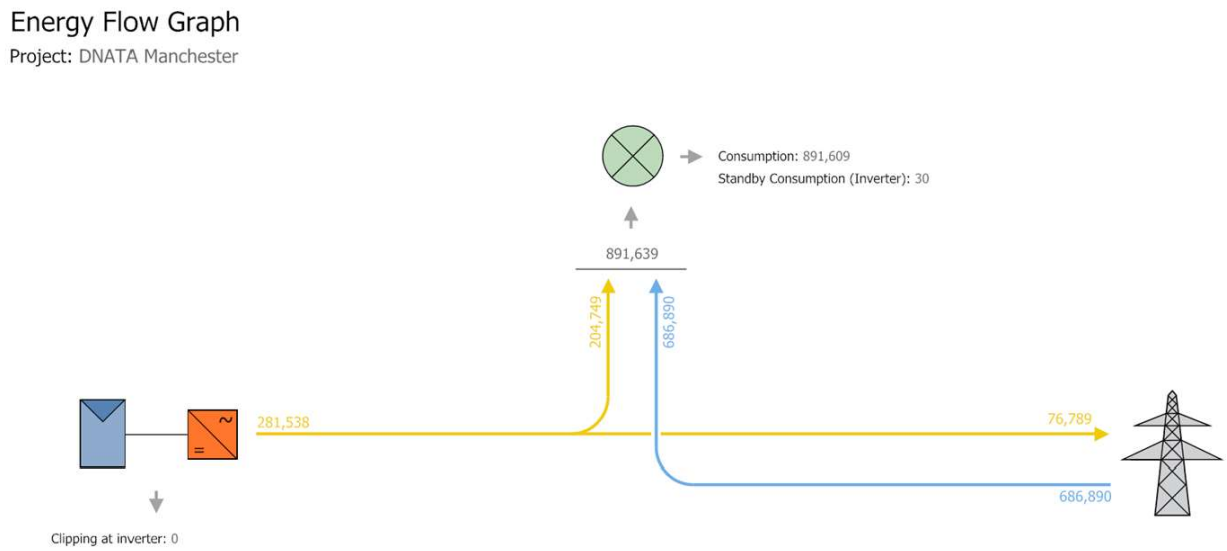


Source: Inspired Energy Solutions (January 2025; p. 16)

The total PV output will be in the region of 330.48 kWp. Based on forecasts in the PV System Specification Sheet enclosed with this Planning Statement, 281,538 kWh/year of electricity will be generated from the development. Approximately 73% of the power generated (an estimated 204,749 kWh/year) will be expended by the cargo facility, with the rest of the energy created (an estimated 76,789 kWh/year) to be fed into the electricity grid.

In total, it is expected that the PV units installed will provide up to 23% self-sufficiency levels for the facility in helping to carry out its operations. Figure 3 below illustrates the energy flows predicted.

Figure 3: Predicted Energy Flow Graph



Source: Inspired Energy Solutions (January 2025; p. 12)

Relevant Planning History

There is no relevant planning history available on the Manchester City Council online planning register relating to the site, other than that associated with the original development of the warehouse facility.

Assessment of proposal

This section of this covering letter appraises the proposed change of use against all the relevant Class J criteria.

J.1 states that development is not permitted by Class J as follows:

(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

The proposed PV solar panels will not protrude more than 0.2 metres beyond the plane of the roof slope, being only 3cm thick and mounted almost flush. The 8-degree existing inclination of the pitched roof will help to avoid extra installation measures that would increase the height more than 0.2 metres beyond the plane.

(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)

The proposed PV panels will be installed on a pitched roof, not a flat roof. As such, J.1(b) does not apply to this development.

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

The proposed PV solar panel will be installed approximately 2m away from the nearest external edge of the roof.

Part (d) was omitted by virtue of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development etc.) (England) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 2023.

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

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.

The site is not a listed building or within the curtilage of a listed building.

J.2 does not apply to this application as it relates to Class J(a) and J(b). J.3 was omitted under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development etc.) (England) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 2023.

J.4 outlines the conditions that apply to Class J permitted development. The two conditions of relevance to this application are the following:

- Amenity – Condition J.4 (1)(a)
- Glare – Condition J.4 (2)

A. Amenity impact

The condition requires that the equipment is sited so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building and the amenity of the area. Being located at roof level of a relatively tall building, and lying approximately flush with the roof, means that the panels will not be visible from public vantage points. As such, it is considered to have no impact on the external appearance of the building. Where they are visible (i.e. from the air) they will not appear out of place on an industrial building of this nature.

B. Glare impact

As the development falls under Class J(c), prior approval is required as to the design or external appearance of the development, particularly in relation to impact of glare on occupiers of neighbouring land. This is particularly pertinent in this case, given the proximity of the site to Manchester Airport, which surrounds the site to the north and east.

This prior approval application is accompanied by a Glint and Glare Study, prepared by Pagerpower (dated January 2025). Due to the location of the site next to Manchester Airport, the study assesses the impact of glint and glare on aviation receptors. The study concludes that the intensity of glare from the proposal on multiple aviation receptors were of minimal to low impact. Given this, no mitigation is recommended as part the scheme. As such, the external design of the proposal is more than sufficient to stop harmful glare impacts from the development.

The additional information as required under J.4 (3) is provided as part of this application and included on the application forms.

Conclusion

To conclude, the proposed PV solar equipment to be installed on the Dnata City North roof satisfies all the criteria and associated conditions set out in Class J of the 2015 GDPO (as amended).

As set out above, the only matters for prior approval consideration are design and glare impact on surrounding uses. The submitted Glint and Glare assessment concludes there is minimal to low impact on aviation receptors, with no mitigation required and the location of the panels ensure there is no design or visual impact.

Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Council should either confirm within 56 days of receipt of this application that, that prior approval is not required for this proposed conversation, or that prior approval is required and is granted subject to any conditions the Council consider should be imposed upon the granting of prior approval.

We look forward to receiving confirmation that the application has been validated and please contact us if you have any concerns, or if you require any clarification or information in relation to the submitted application.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]
Assistant Planning Consultant