

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 141805/LO/2024

Date registered valid: 23 December 2024

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for the installation of floor mounted air sourced heat pumps and enclosure, replacement flat roof coverings and rooflights, replacement external windows and doors and installation of cavity injected wall insulation.

Address: Blackley Cemetery Office And Yard, Victoria Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 8JP

Ward(s): Higher Blackley Ward

Applicant: Martyn Joyce, Manchester City Council

Agent (if any): Drees & Sommer UK Ltd

Case officer: Ellie Knowles
Tel: 0161 219 6633
Email: ellie.knowles@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve

Date of recommendation: 2 June 2025

Application details

Type of application: Listed Building Consent

Development type: Listed building alteration

Date of site visit: 12 February 2025

Standard consultations:

Printed: 9 January 2025 Expired: 30 January 2025

Neighbour notifications

No neighbour notifications have been printed and sent.

Site notice

Posted: 12 February 2025 Expired: 5 March 2025

Press advert

Published: 14 January 2025 Expired: 4 February 2025

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

The application site relates to a modern (1959) curtilage building to the Grade II listed crematorium chapel. It is set back and elevated on a grass bank 105 metres northeast of and facing the listed building separated by a tree-lined avenue (Rose Walk). Running in front of the building is Willow Walk an internal access road which provides vehicular access with a small parking area in front. It provides Registrar, Chapel of Remembrance and associated back-office and maintenance services.

Its significance derives from its contemporaneous design and construction with clarity of design, by the same architect, and using the same materials as the listed Crematorium and chapel. It has group value with the listed building and its own distinctive features in the same Modernist style.

Its most striking feature is a 2-storey brown brick tower on the front elevation that has a hexadecagonal plan form, with vertical exposed concrete fins. This elevation comprises its special interest and contributes to the architectural interest of the listed building due southwest. By its association with the listed building, it has the potential to be curtilage listed and is treated as such for the purposes of this application.

At the rear, the building has an open-sided central courtyard with a series of ancillary rooms around the perimeter providing a parks office, tool store, switch/boiler room, drying room and staff facilities. These are accessed under a canopy roof and secured by the original timber doors. There is extensive parkland planting to the north, east and south and parking at the front and to the north-west.



Figure.1: Blackley Cemetery Chapel of Remembrance building and cemetery offices

Listed building: Curtilage Listed Building in the setting of Grade II Building

Conservation area: Not applicable

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

Description of area

The host building is set within extensive, landscaped grounds, containing a Grade II listed building, graveyard and remembrance garden.

The Chapel of Remembrance building and cemetery offices is set within the southern section of Blackley Cemetery at the north-eastern end of a short north-east - south-west tree lined avenue (Rose Walk) that connects the chapel and office to the listed crematorium.

The site is accessed from Victoria Avenue (A6104), with a second access road via Chapel Lane off Blackley New Road.

The area surrounding the site is largely residential in character.

Description of development

Listed Building Consent for the installation of floor mounted air sourced heat pumps and enclosure, replacement flat roof coverings and rooflights, replacement external windows and doors and installation of cavity injected wall insulation.

The scope of work encompassing the LO application will be carried out as follows:

1. Office and Chapel roof areas are to be upgraded with replacement built-up mineral felt roof system with improved 130mm thick insulation to achieve U Value 0.18 W/m²K (refer to image 03).
2. Existing single skin rooflights are also to be upgraded with quadruple skin polycarbonate to match existing profile to achieve U Value 0.14 W/m²K all as detailed on drawing ref: P24606.108-A.

3. It is proposed that expanded polystyrene insulation is applied by injection method to external cavity walls of the Office building to achieve a U-value of 0.40 W/m²K to areas identified on drawing ref: P24606.107. Due to narrow cavity's and absence of a damp proof course, the Chapel and Yard buildings would not receive cavity wall insulation.
4. Triple-glazed slimline aluminium framed windows and doors are proposed to replace the remaining original single-glazed Crittall and timber units to Office to achieve U-value of 1.1 W/m²K, the Yard building windows would be replaced with double-glazed units to locations detailed on drawing ref: P24606.104.
5. The replacement double-glazed aluminium windows to the Office would be retained, Upvc windows are to be replaced with slimline aluminium. Original timber doors to the Yard building are also to be retained. The memorial sculpture would be reinstated on the new entrance doors (see fig.2).



Figure.2: Chapel entrance doors (internal) northwestern elevation

6. Removal of existing gas boilers and installation of cascade system of 1no. Ideal Ecomod R290HT 50 KW high temperature air source heat pump units to the East facing elevation (see figs.3 & 5), with associated pipework connections as indicated on drawing ref: 3390-CWC-XX-00-DR-M-5001-T3.
7. Formation of ASHP compound enclosure up to 3.0m in height, comprising timber acoustic fencing with gated access including formation of concrete base support as indicated on drawing ref: 3390-CWC-XX-00-DR-M-5001-T3 (see fig.4).

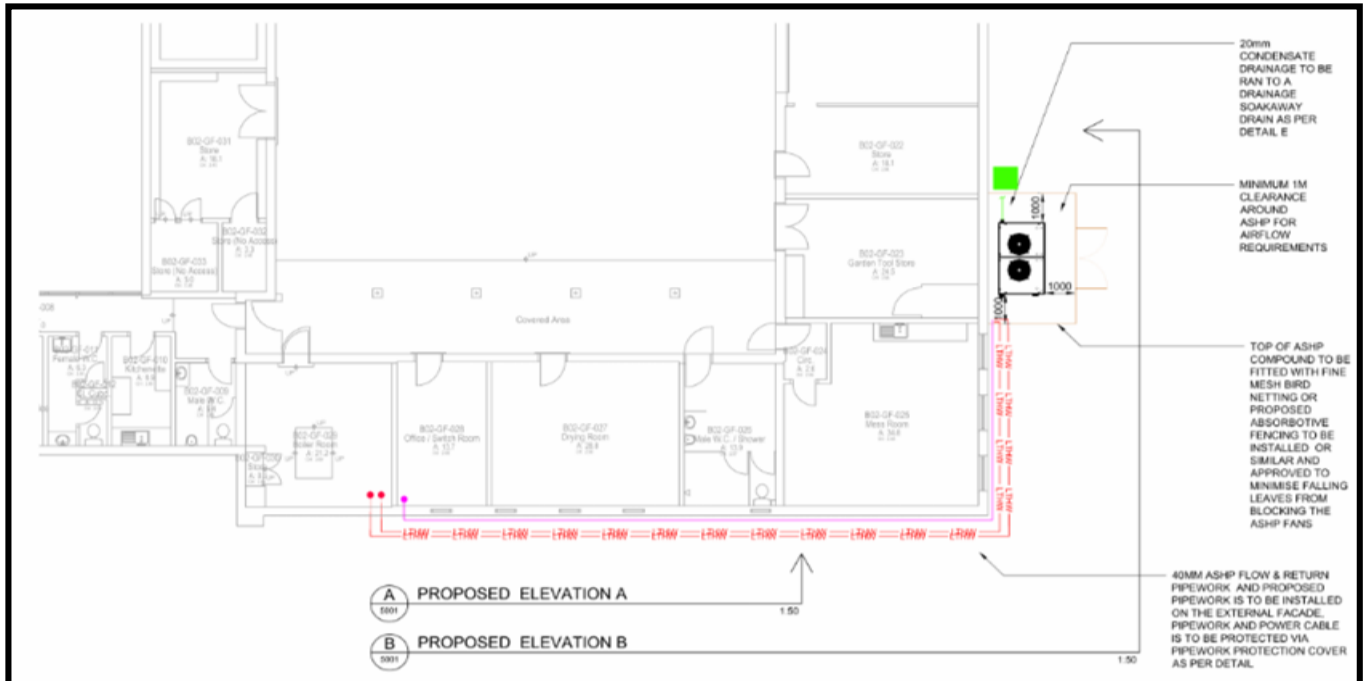


Figure.3: Proposed location of ASHP and enclosure

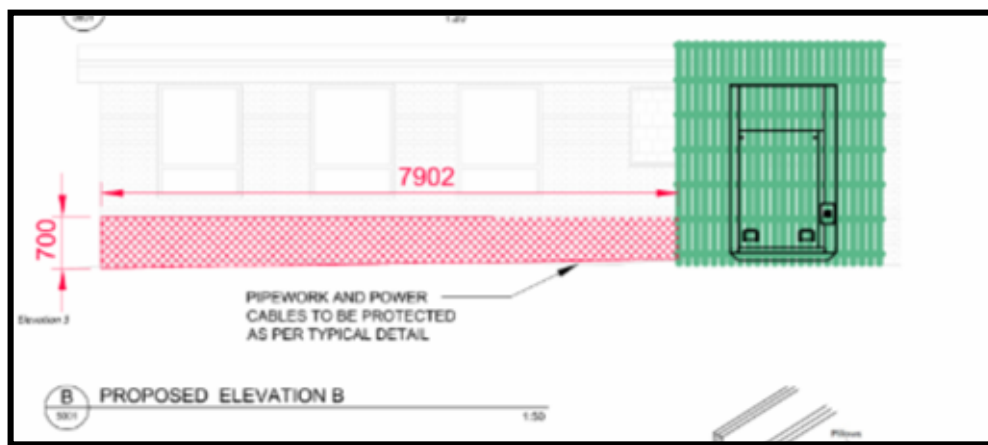


Figure.4: Proposed elevations of ASHP and enclosure



Figure.5: Proposed location of ASHP and enclosure to rear of property (Eastern elevation)

Consultations & Notification Responses

Local responses

None

Consultee responses

None

Relevant Planning History

At the Blackley Crematorium –

141807/VO/2024 – City Council Development for the installation of floor mounted air sourced heat pumps and living green wall enclosure to replace gas fed boilers, upgrade heating system, installation of roof mounted solar PV array, installation of 5no. fixed ladder access to rear elevations of the building and roof mounted mansafe system. *Pending consideration.*

138652/LO/2023 – City Council Development Listed Building Consent for installation of Wi-Fi access points and associated cabling. Approved 30.01.2024

132396/VO/2021 – City Council Development to enclose 5no. original concrete roof light domes with clear acrylic domes with GRP surround. Approved 29.03.2022.

130138/LO/2021 – Listed Building Consent for the replacement of cremators, and associated plant and ventilation system, internal and external alterations. Approved 26.07.2021.

130137/VO/2021 – City Council Development for replacement of Cremators, and associated plant and ventilation system, internal and external alterations. Approved 26.07.2021.

087437/VO/2008/N1 – City Council Development external alterations to form access panel to basement. Approved 01.10.2008.

History of negotiations

An options appraisal for solar PV arrays within the yard area of this property has been discussed with the planning and heritage officers. To enable consolidation of plans and heritage impact information of an alternative carport option, the PV element has been omitted from this current application by the agent via email dated 13/05/2025, with view to submit a standalone PV scheme.

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-P1 – Sustainable Places

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
EN 4 – Reducing CO2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development (partially superseded by PfE)
EN 6 – Target Framework for CO2 reductions from low or zero carbon energy supplies
EN 7 – Energy Infrastructure opportunities
EN 8 – Adaptation to Climate Change
EN 9 – Green Infrastructure
EN 15 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (partially superseded by PfE)
EN 16 – Air Quality (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 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Paragraph 8 states *“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*** – *to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- b) ***a social objective*** – *to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- c) ***an environmental objective*** – *to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”*

Paragraph 98 (d) states that development should *“ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise and are retained for the benefit of the community.”*

Paragraph 135 (c) states that developments should be *“sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);.”*

Paragraph 136 states *“Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change.”*

Paragraph 167 states *“significant weight [should be given] to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights).”*

Paragraph 202 states *“Heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.”*

Paragraph 207 states *“Local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, 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.”*

Paragraph 208 states *“LPAs should ensure that any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal is avoided or minimised.”*

Paragraph 210 states *“In determining applications, LPA’s 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.”*

Paragraph 212 states *“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 (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”*

Paragraph 213 states *“Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.”*

Paragraph 215 states *“where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

Paragraph 219 states *“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 application forms part of a city-wide programme of decarbonising the City’s assets in line with meeting its net zero carbon commitment as set out in the Climate Change Action Plan 2020-2025.

As such, the proposal is considered pursuant to policies JP-S1 and JP-S2 Places for Everyone, policies EN3, EN4, EN5, EN7 and EN8 of the Core Strategy (2012), and would help the Crematorium achieve its energy targets. As such, the principle of development is considered acceptable.

However, consideration must be given to the proposal's appearance, alongside its impact upon the curtilage listed heritage asset and adjacent listed building and its setting.

Impact on heritage and visual amenity:

The application has been subject to detailed pre application discussion and continued dialogue, 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 works will have less than substantial harm upon the curtilage listed building.

ASHPs

A key intervention in the decarbonisation transition is the replacement of the existing gas boilers with temperature air source heat pump units. A higher operating temperature means that the existing internal radiators and pipework can be retained, significantly minimising the number of interventions, loss and disturbance of original fabric.

In this application, the proposal is to site a cascade system of 1no. Ideal Ecomod R290HT 50 KW in a fenced enclosure at the rear of the service yard (northeastern elevation) beyond the open courtyard. This is considered a discreet location which was discussed on the site visit in September 2024. There is no reason for the public to access this part of the site which has topography that slopes down towards the building comprising of a grassed and treed bank.

The ASHP would sit against the rear wall as shown on drawing: 3390-CWC-XX-ZZ-DR-M-5001 Rev T3 enclosed within a 3m high Jakoustic Absorptive acoustic fence with meshed top to address leaf fall. Timber gates for access and maintenance would be sited on the northeastern elevation.

The plant would be connected to the boiler room on the southeastern elevation by pipework and cabling running at a low level along the external walls, entering the boiler room via 3no. 200mmØ penetrations low down on the wall. These would be enclosed within a 700mm deep x 20-metre-long covered cable tray which would screen their external appearance. The cover, also shown on drawing no: 3390-CWC-XX-ZZ-DR-M-5001 Rev T3, is dark coloured which will help to minimise its appearance against the brick elevations.

In heritage terms, this work is supported, the Council is confident that NPPF para.212 is satisfied; the location of the ASHPs and associated pipework is an area that makes little contribution to the special interest of the building, the level of harm is at the lower end of less than substantial and is outweighed by significant public benefits which are fully justified.

The ASHPs will enable the cemetery office and its associated back-office functions to reduce its operational carbon cost and to transition away from the current fossil-fuel system in the most sustainable way. The proposal supports the Councils net zero carbon reduction ambitions and will deliver financial savings for the Council in the long term.

The proposal is supported by Core Strategy policies EN4, EN6 and EN8 and at the GM level where the Council has signed up to the Climate Change Action Plan with a view to becoming net zero carbon by 2038.

The proposal also meets the test within paras. 208, 210, 212, 213 and 215 of the NPPF and Core Strategy policy EN3, both preserving and enhancing the asset whilst making substantial carbon savings.

Associated Roof Works

The opportunity has been taken to upgrade the thermal efficiencies of the roofs by installing 130mm thick insulation below a weathertight replacement mineral felt roof. This will achieve a U-value of 0.18W/m²K. Existing single skin polycarbonate rooflights are also proposed to be replaced by quadruple glazed rooflights to reduce the U-value (shown on drawing: P24606.108-A). The upgrade will reduce thermal losses and increase thermal comfort to the benefit of building occupiers and visitors.

Window and Door Replacement

A total of 38no. windows are proposed to be replaced. These are detailed on drawings P24606.102 and P24606.105 and include replacement of the remaining timber framed and uPVC units to the internal courtyard, service yard and at the offices, which have reached their useful end of life.

Beyond the timber fabric, none of the windows are considered to contribute to the buildings' architectural and historic interest and are in the least sensitive elevations of the building with limited public access. Nonetheless, low-e, argon-filled replacements which are all either double (28mm thick, U-value 1.5W/m²K) or triple glazed (43mm thick, U-value 1.1W/m²K) within slimline aluminium frames, are proposed to replicate the current window design including glazing bar patterns, on a like for like basis. This is an appropriate response which maintains the overall aesthetic and character of the buildings. It is supported in Historic England guidance which states that:

Replacement of windows which do not contribute to the architectural or historic interest of a building with double-glazed windows of appropriate material and pattern, will generally be acceptable (Para.82 HE Advice Note 18 - Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency).

4no. door replacements are proposed including the original glazed door on the northwestern external elevation between the Chapel of Remembrance and offices, which stands between two glazed panels. This 'glazed wall' is to be replaced with a double-glazed slimline aluminium glazing wall and door, with glazing bars to match the existing proportions and composition. At the site meeting (sept 2024), it was observed that the door handle here may be original and stylistically corresponds with other aspects of the building (see fig.6). This is not indicated on the window drawings, therefore in order to preserve this heritage feature a condition is attached which requires the original door handle to either be retained or replicated like for like. Beyond this door is a steel sculpture which acts as a support for flowers and messages. This would be reinstated following replacement of the door and glazed wall in this location.



Figure.6: Chapel entrance doors (external) northwestern elevation

Other doors include the non-original external shutter and door to the northeast of the offices (facing the service yard) and the non-original door to the northwest of the Chapel of Remembrance.

On balance, the replacements represent an opportunity to unify the appearance and performance of the windows and doors across the building. This will benefit the building overall in terms of introducing a higher quality material that will ensure the continued longevity of the building and complement the other decarbonisation and building envelope thermal upgrades.

Cavity Wall Insulation

The office building pre-dates Building Regulations and as with all others on the site, has uninsulated cavity walls. It is proposed to inject expanded polystyrene beads (EPS) insulation into the external cavity walls of the office building to achieve a U-value of 0.40 W/m²K. Due to there being no damp-proof course membrane in the Chapel of Remembrance and yard building walls, it is not proposed to insulate those spaces. The insulation will contribute towards energy saving measures within the office, limit heat losses through the building envelope reducing the reliance on space heating.

Trees:

The agent has confirmed via email dated (27/05/2025) that no trees will be removed as a result of proposed works.

Conclusion:

The proposals are supported with recommendation for a condition to secure retention of the original door handle on the northwestern elevation between the cemetery offices and Chapel of Remembrance.

Harm to the asset has been minimised through selective site location and adjustments to the positioning of the proposed infrastructure and site appropriate mitigation measures. 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 public building to transition from fossil fuels to clean and sustainable air-sourced heat pump and solar PV technology whilst preserving the integrity, fabric and character of the curtilage building. The proposal accords with Core Strategy policies EN3, EN4, EN6, EN8 and EN9 of the Core Strategy, JP-P1, 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. 3 Year Time Limit

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 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2. Specified drawings/documents

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

- 24127-FMA-B2-EX-DR-S-0001 P02: Proposed Slab to ASHP Compound
- 24606.102: Proposed Ground Floor Fenestration Plan
- 24606.104: Proposed Elevations Fenestration Plan
- 24606.105: Window & Door Schedule
- 24606.106: CWI Plan
- 24606.107: CWI Elevations
- 24606.108: Proposed Roof Plan
- 24606.108: Fire Penetrations Details Plan
- 3390-CWC-XX-00-DR-E-6201 T2: Small Power Outlet Plan
- 3390-CWC-XX-00-DR-N-2801 T1: Builders Work Layout Plan
- 3390-CWC-XX-ZZ-DR-M-5001 T3: Proposed External MEP Plans

- Heritage Statement (Prepared by Turley, Dated December 2024)
- Design & Access Statement (Prepared by Drees & Sommer; Dated December 2024)

- Tree Constraint Plan (Prepared by Treestyle Consultancy Ltd; Dated 06/05/2025; Received 12/05/2025)
- Tree Protection Plan (Prepared by Treestyle Consultancy Ltd; Dated 06/05/2025; Received 12/05/2025)
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Prepared by Treestyle Consultancy Ltd; Dated 29/04/2025; Received 12/05/2025)
- Tree Survey (Prepared by Treestyle Consultancy Ltd; Dated 14/03/2025; Received 12/05/2025)
- 3384-CWC-XX-EX-DR-E-6002 T3: Proposed Below Ground Cabling Layout Drawing (Received 12/05/2025)

- R2333-REP01-JW REV A: Noise Impact Statement (Prepared by Red Acoustics; Dated 30/05/2025; Received 30/05/2025)
- 3390-CWC-XX-XX-SP-ME-0001 T2: MEP Services Particular Specification (Prepared by Crookes Walker Consulting; Dated 18/12/2024)
- Email dated 27/05/2025 (15:34pm) from Drees & Sommer

Stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 23/12/2024 unless specified otherwise.

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. Chapel door handle

Notwithstanding the submitted plans, the original door handle on the door between the Chapel of Remembrance and offices on the northwest elevation, shall be retained and reused in this location, or replaced on a like for like basis with a handle of similar design, materials and proportions.

The original door handle on the door between the Chapel of Remembrance and offices on the northwest elevation, shall be retained and reused in this location, or replaced on a like for like basis with a handle of similar design, materials and proportions.

Reason- To ensure that the proposed works to a building which is included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest are undertaken in accordance with best conservation practice to protect the character and appearance of this building and in accordance with saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

Informatives

1. The installation of PV arrays on this property would require subsequent planning permission and Listed Building Consent.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Heritage & Urban Design

Neighbourhood Team Leader (Arboriculture)

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

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

Historic Landfill Site 250m Buffer -

Area Team Boundary - Name: NORTH AREA