

23 July 2024

FAO Jack Naven
Planning Department
Manchester City Council
Town Hall
Manchester
M602LA

Dear Jack,

Science and Industry Museum, Liverpool Road: Power Hall Package 4b, Application for Listed Building Consent (PP: 13211693)

Please find enclosed an application for Listed Building Consent ('the application'), submitted on behalf of our Client, the Science and Industry Museum ('the Museum'), in relation to internal interpretation works and exhibition layout at the Power Hall. The description of development is:

"Listed Building Consent for internal Interpretation design and refurbishment works at the Power Hall including works to install panels and labels, object showcases, imagery and neon signage as well as rationalising floor coverings and associated works."

The Applicant is the Science and Industry Museum.

Background

In December 2020, £4.3 million of funding from the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme was awarded to the Power Hall and the wider Science and Industry Museum (SIM) site to substantially improve energy efficiency and lower carbon emissions across this globally significant site. This grant will ensure the museum's environmental sustainability and support Greater Manchester's goal to become carbon neutral by 2038 – 12 years ahead of the national target.

This environmental sustainability project will utilise some of the unique site-specific opportunities. For example, in 1830 a well was built on the site to harness the power of the ground water. This natural resource will once again be utilised by the installation of new water source heat pumps and boreholes along with the latest green technologies. This is a visionary, sector-leading project where the original and modern combine to create a sustainable museum of the future. Additional funding from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport will help to place carbon literacy and zero carbon technology at the heart of the museum's story and visitor experience, as well as assisting in undertaking urgent and major repairs to the Power Hall. Overall, the project will transform the Power Hall into a landmark symbol of the past,

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present and future of engineering, inspiring future scientists, entrepreneurs and innovators in developing careers and skills to help achieve a green economy and the next (green) industrial revolution.

The Power Hall and Decarbonisation project is to be delivered as one project. However, the required Planning and Listed Building Consent applications have been split into several separate applications to align with Government set funding deadlines. Splitting the packages of work into separate applications has also allowed construction work to start on site earlier. Construction is underway and commenced on Package 4 on 15.01.2024.

This application is for Package 4 of 4 as highlighted in the below table.

Works Package	Package Description	Planning and Listed Building Consent Applications	Application reference number and decision
1A	Water Source Heat Pump Network (External) Water Source Heat Pump and other associated plant in the Power Hall	Application for Listed Building Consent for alterations to the Grade II Listed Power Hall for the creation of openings and the installation of plant plus the introduction of a services trench within its curtilage.	Approved 01.07.21 130170/LO/2021
1B	Boiler House External Modifications (to facilitate installation of a new sub-station) Pipework in the 1830 Warehouse (to facilitate installation of a new water source heat pump)	- Application for Listed Building Consent for installation of a new services trench within the curtilage of the Grade II New Warehouse. - Application for Planning Permission external works to the Boiler Room including removal of an external staircase and making good in addition to the installation of a new balustrade and new doors. - Application for Listed Building Consent for alterations to the Grade I Listed 1830 Warehouse for the creation of openings and the installation of pipework plus the introduction of a	130173/LO/2021 130171/FO/2021 130172/LO/2021

Works Package	Package Description	Planning and Listed Building Consent Applications	Application reference number and decision
		services trench and borehole cover within its curtilage.	
2	Power Hall Roof Removal	- Application for Planning Permission for removal of the Power Hall roof during refurbishment and repair works. - Application for Listed Building Consent for the removal of the Power Hall roof during refurbishment and repair works.	Approved 29.07.21 130614/FO/2021 130615/LO/2021
3a	Power Hall Timber Repairs and Strengthening	Application for Listed Building Consent for Timber Repairs and Strengthening in relation to the Power Hall roof.	Approved 04.10.21 131290/LO/2021
3b	Power Hall Roof reinstatement, new windows and doors, new internal services, fabric repairs and removal of 1980s internal platform and railway doors.	- Application for Planning Permission for removal of the Power Hall roof during refurbishment and repair works. - Application for Listed Building Consent for the removal of the Power Hall roof during refurbishment and repair works.	Approved 19.11.21 130614/FO/2021 130615/LO/2021
4a	Power Hall Gallery Refurbishment	Application for Listed Building Consent for internal gallery refurbishment works.	Approved 19.10.2023 137397/LO/2023
4b	Power Hall Interpretation Package	Application for Listed Building Consent	This application

Site Context

The Power Hall is a Grade II Listed Building within the Science and Industry Museum complex. The Science and Industry Museum is located to the north-west of central Manchester, to the east of the River Irwell and within the Castlefield Conservation Area.

The below plan identifies where the Power Hall is located within the Science and Industry Museum.

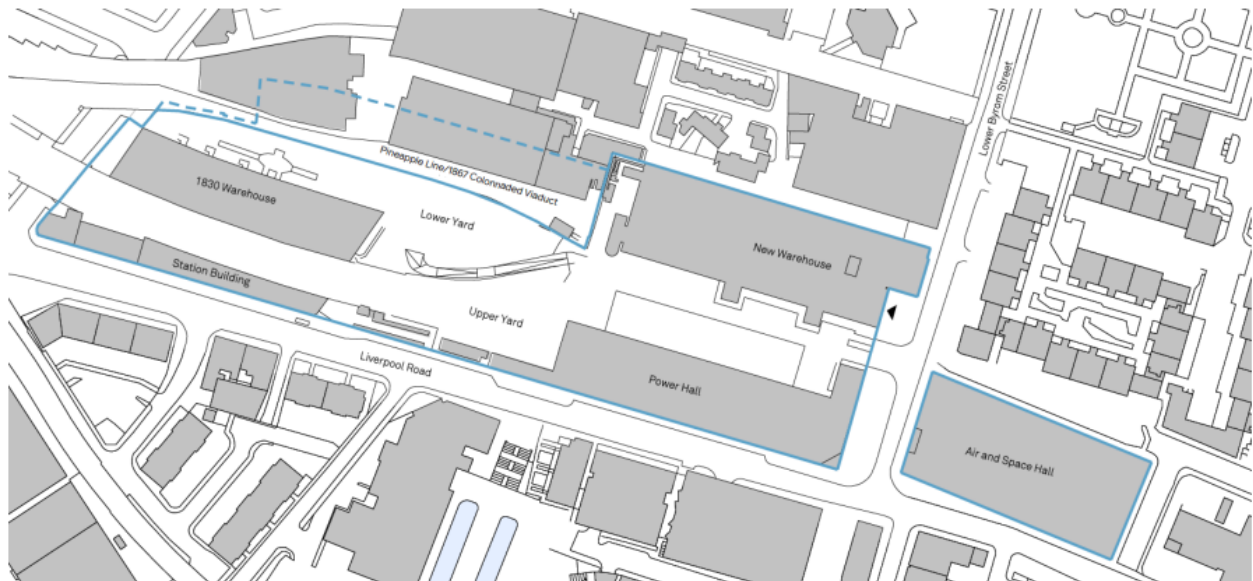


Figure 1 - Site Plan of Science Museum Estate, plan prepared by Carmody Groarke

The Power Hall was erected as a shipping shed in 1855 for the LNWR to provide space for immediate unloading and transportation of goods on to carts, trucks and overnight garaging for locomotives. Offices were built at its western end in the early 1860s to serve the administrative functions of the shipping shed. In 1881, a substantial electrical travelling gantry train was installed by the LNWR, adjoining the northern elevation of the building to support its expanded use. The building remained in use as a goods transfer shed until the mid-1970s.

In the late 1970s – mid 1980s, a series of considerable repairs and alterations were carried out and an extension was added to the north west of the Site to convert the building into a gallery for the Science and Industry Museum. The shipping shed was subsequently renamed the ‘Power Hall’ and has housed the Museum’s collection of locomotives and industrial engines since 1983.

The Power Hall was considerably redeveloped throughout the 1980s with works carried out to remove timber doors and insert glazing as well as a new door being introduced at the west elevation of the structure. Rooflight glazing was also implemented and new rooflights inserted to the east slope. Exhibition plinths and footings to support the exhibition collection were introduced while central loading platforms were removed. In addition, a new platform was introduced to the east of the Power Hall alongside railings and steps while concrete paths were introduced, and rails and cobbles relaid.

In 2018 the Power Hall was closed to members of the public due to health and safety concerns in relation to the poor condition of the roof. In the same year a £6 million grant from the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and additional funding from the Science Museum Group was committed to the Power Hall to facilitate urgent and major repairs to the roof and a refurbishment of the exhibition gallery itself, which demonstrates how Manchester influenced the world.

This application relates to the final stages of the Power Hall decarbonisation project which seeks to rationalise floor coverings in order to improve accessibility throughout the exhibition while also implementing an interpretation design package related to the layout of key displays and furniture which enhances legibility and provide an improved visitor experience.

Pre Application Engagement

The scope of this application has been discussed with Manchester City Council ('MCC') as the Local Planning Authority. Over the course of the 4 phases of works, many pre-application meetings and site visits have been held to discuss the proposals. MCC are supportive of the principle of development and this is demonstrated through the grant of permissions for the previous phases of work.

Regarding this package of works specifically, detailed discussions have been undertaken including in relation to the strategy for the re-use of original cobbles within the building as well as the proposed interpretation works.

Planning and conservation officers at MCC were receptive to the proposed Interpretation Design Package, acknowledging the importance of these works in creating a high-quality visitor experience and helping restore the Power Hall to its optimum use as a museum. Concerns were however raised regarding the increased extent to which historic cobbles were lost. As a result a follow up meeting was conducted at which the team provided further details as to the reasoning behind the proposed increase in loss of historic cobbles in terms of accessibility requirements. In addition, further details were provided related to the optioneering process that had fed into the proposals and lead to the final proposed solution. Based upon these discussions MCC has requested that these details be robustly reflected within the planning submission.

Proposals

The description of development for the Listed Building Consent is:

"Listed Building Consent for internal Interpretation design and refurbishment works at the Power Hall including works to install panels and labels, object showcases, imagery and neon signage as well as rationalising floor coverings and associated works."

The proposed works which form this application can be separated into two workstreams which are summarised below and are fully detailed in the accompanying Design Documents prepared by Carmody Groarke and Studio Mutt, as well as the architectural drawings submitted with this application.

Interpretation Works

The interpretation design package seeks to create an atmospheric and accessible experience within the Power Hall, which highlights the unique collection and historic setting.

This package includes the following proposed works:

- Interpretation panels and labels;
- Smaller object showcases;
- Main entrance gathering space;
- 2D atmospheric imagery; and,
- Sympathetic LED neon signage to aid wayfinding.

The proposed approach divides the existing collection into 3 sections across the gallery which are made up of a combination of the large scale permanent engines plus additional images and ancillary objects. A new accessible entrance orientation space is proposed for visitor information and gathering.

In terms of the proposed layout, the proposal is for a series of largely furniture scale elements that will be strategically placed throughout the Power Hall to create a narrative throughout the space. Inclusive design solutions will reduce barriers, including a new accessible entrance and improved sightlines lighting routes around the exhibition to help visitors better navigate the gallery.

The series of proposed components and their locations within the Power Hall can be seen in section 5.0 between pages 12-17 of the Design Report prepared by Studio Mutt and submitted in support of this application.

In terms of accessibility, the proposals aim to create a more accessible exhibition experience, with key accessibility principles ensuring the following:

- Wheelchair access to allow for unrestricted use of touch screens and interactive elements of the displays.
- Entrance gathering space located on newly accessible cobbles to create an inclusive and well functioning space.
- Interpretation panels, consoles and labels have been located on floor areas with accessible finishes where possible.
- 2D designs have accessible fonts and colour contrasts.
- Images and text have been set out at accessible heights.
- Benches and seating are provided throughout the gallery.
- Accessible circulation routes set out in the base build have been maintained.

Cobble Layout Proposals

The proposals represent a change to the previously approved cobble layout as approved under LPA Ref. 137397/LO/2023. This application is seeking to expand the consented area of new accessible cobbles at the entrance to the Power Hall. The previously consented scheme looked to provide a cohesive floor finish and coherent circulation route throughout the Power Hall with 94% of lifted cobbles re-laid, leaving the entrance area with a concrete finish and new accessible cobbles. This aided accessibility and wayfinding.

The development of the Interpretative Design Package has however found that this strategy renders some parts of the exhibition displays inaccessible. Therefore, this application seeks to extend the area of accessible cobbles to the west and east of the entrance. These areas immediately adjacent to the main entrance play a critical role in the experience of the museum as they are the first interface that the public has with the collection. Both of these areas are intended to be used for the interpretation and discovery of the museum collection.

Consequently, the overall percentage of existing cobbles to be retained and re-used will reduce from 94% to 80%. An assessment of the heritage impact of this alteration and its compliance with Policy is provided in the following sections within this Covering Letter as well as the Heritage Statement prepared by Donald Insall Associates in support of this application.

Methodology

Detailed method statements for all works to be carried out as part of this application have been included within drawings prepared by Studio Mutt. These fully detail how the works will be carried out as well as how historic fabric will be protected prior to works beginning and throughout the works taking place in order to avoid conditions being attached related to the associated works.

Accordance with Planning Policy

The key material planning consideration for this application is the impact on the designated heritage asset, the Power Hall, and therefore adherence to planning policy regarding the historic environment.

Paragraph 190 of the NPPF (2021) states that *“in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*

- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”*

Paragraphs 201-203 place great weight on the conservation of designated heritage assets, emphasising the need to avoid “substantial harm” in terms of demolition, significant alteration, or compromise the setting unless that harm is clearly justified (via four specific tests) or there are substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm. 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.

Significance of Power Hall

The Power Hall at Manchester's Liverpool Road Station holds high historic, evidential, and aesthetic value. It represents the success of the station as a goods transfer hub and reflects the development of railway goods sheds. Notably, it was the first building used by the Museum to celebrate the station's 150th anniversary. Features such as the roof lights and blind arcading contribute to its significance. However, some elements, like the mid-20th century WC block and the early-1980s Visitor Entrance Block, have little or neutral architectural value. The significance of the Power Hall is reflected in its Grade II listing. For more detailed information, refer to the accompanying Heritage Impact Assessment by Donald Insall Associates.

Due to the historic significance of the Power Hall an assessment has been undertaken regarding the impact of the proposals on this heritage asset whilst also highlighting the key public benefits in line with relevant National and Local Policy.

Impact on listed Building:

The accompanying Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by Donald Insall Associates assesses the works in terms of impact on the listed building and concludes that the proposals would result in minor instances of less than substantial harm to the significance of the Power Hall.

It is noted that, whilst the floor finish now proposed has seen a decrease in the quantum of cobbles re-laid, this forms part of an overall rationalisation of the floor finishes which would significantly enhance the overall appearance of the Power Hall floor surfacing. In addition, any harm identified through the loss of existing cobbles would be offset by the public benefits the scheme will deliver. The public benefits underpin the ambitions of the Power Hall project and include providing equal access within the building. Improved accessibility will allow all visitors to engage with the exhibition displays. Accessibility will be delivered whilst utilising materials that do not compromising the aesthetic of the Power Hall.

Further to this, the methodologies prepared by Studio Mutt set out the sequential process of recording and protection of historic fabric and monitoring works which would ensure that the significant elements of the listed building are preserved.

Applicant Response

As part of the proposal to install new floor finishes and rationalise existing floor finishes, existing cobbles will be re-laid alongside the introduction of selected new materials. The new materials will enable accessible routes, whilst the re-laid cobbles seek to retain historic fabric and preserve character within the building. The materials are simple and complementary, marrying heritage with improved access.

However, of the existing cobbles, there will be a small proportion that cannot be re-used. The resulting loss of cobbles has been restricted to the minimum amount necessary and has been carefully balanced against the provision of accessible routes. However, the loss of a small proportion of the historic cobbles will result in low less than substantial harm to historic fabric, and the floor finishes specifically.

However, the low level of less than substantial harm is outweighed by the delivery of considerable public benefits, including ensuring that the Power hall and its exhibits are accessible for all. Moreover, the newly laid existing cobbles, rationalised across the building, along with the carefully selected new floor finishes will enhance the overall appearance of the building.

The proposals also allow for the installation of the exhibit collateral, which, once complete, contribute to the continued use of the building in its optimal viable use as a museum. The interior of the building, the flooring and the exhibits will contribute to a positive, educational and engaging visitor experience. The associated interpretation signage will support visitor understanding of the collections on display.

Overall, the proposals are beneficial in terms of ensuring the long-term conservation of the Grade II listed structure as well as the wider museum complex, resulting in a major heritage and public benefit as well as enhancing the contribution of the Museum to the wider visitor economy for the City.

Taking this into account, it is concluded that any instances of 'less than substantial harm' identified through the loss of cobbles would be offset by the public benefits which underpin the ambitions of the Power Hall project. These ambitions seek to provide access for all and an enhanced visitor experience, whilst using complementary and sympathetic finishes within the building. As such the proposals would meet the tests for sustainable development outlined in the NPPF insofar as they relate to the historic environment, the statutory duties contained within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Manchester's local policies.

Application Documents

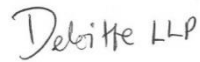
The following information is provided in support of this application:

- Covering Letter (Dated 09.07.24), prepared by Deloitte;
- Design Report Document (Dated 28.06.24) prepared by Studio Mutt Ltd;

- Cobble Strategy Document (Dated 10.07.24) prepared by Carmody Groarke;
- Architectural Drawing Pack (Dated 28.06.24) prepared by Studio Mutt Ltd;
- Architectural Drawing Schedule prepared by Studio Mutt Ltd.
- Heritage Impact Assessment (Dated 02.07.24) prepared by Donald Insall Associates
- Supporting Access Statement (Dated 25.06.24) prepared by Mima.

The Planning Portal Reference is PP:13211693

We look forward to receiving your confirmation that the application has been formally registered. In the meantime, if you have any queries or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact my colleagues Josh Wyatt-Smith (0161 455 8451 / jwyattsmith@deloitte.co.uk) or Eleanor Bird (020 700 73891 / efbird@deloitte.co.uk).

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Deloitte LLP". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Deloitte LLP