

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 144968/FO/2026
Date registered valid: 6 February 2026
Proposal: Installation of 1no. louvre and 1no. roof-mounted air conditioning unit.
Address: Rutherford Building, Coupland Street, Manchester, M13 9GP
Ward(s): Hulme Ward

Applicant: Mr Stuart Lockwood University of Manchester
Agent (if any): Miss Alison Berry Arcadis
Case officer: Michael Pearson
Tel: 0161 219 2735
Email: michael.pearson@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve
Date of recommendation: 30/03/2026

Application details

Type of application: Full Application Consent

Development type: Minor Other

Date of site visit:

Standard consultations:

Printed: 12 February 2026 Expired: 5 March 2026

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 12 February 2026 Expired: 5 March 2026

Site notice

Posted: Expired: Posted: 13 February 2026 Expired: 6 March 2026

Press advert

Published: 17 February 2026 Expired: 10 March 2026

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

The application relates to the Grade II listed Rutherford Building. The property dates from the late Victorian period and forms part of the University of Manchester's historic central campus. The property is completed in a neo-gothic style, with a façade of red brick and sandstone, and a roof of red clay tiles. The application property is currently undergoing works to renovate the interior of the building, approved under permissions 138994/LO/2024 and 138993/FO/2024. There is a live planning permission and listed building consent for the installation of an external rooftop gantry, approved under permissions 143735/FO/2025 and 143736/LO/2025.

Listed building: Grade II

Conservation area: Not applicable

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

Description of area

The neighbouring area forms the heart of the University of Manchester's campus and lies along the Oxford Road Corridor, an area designated as a space for the growth of Manchester's health, higher education, creative and scientific industries. Lying within the heart of the University of Manchester's Campus, the neighbouring area is characterised by well landscaped pedestrianised paths lined by historic buildings in educational uses (Class F1(a)), including the Grade II listed former department of metallurgy and Manchester Museum Extension, as well as the Grade II* listed Whitworth Hall.

Description of development

The application seeks planning permission for the installation of 1no air conditioning unit and 1no louvre.

The proposed air conditioning unit would be situated on the property's flat roof, set against its rooftop stair access. The unit would have a height of 943mm, 1220mm when including the anti-vibration legs it would sit atop of, a width of 950mm and a depth of 330mm.

The proposed louvre would be installed within one of the property's northern facing gables to assist in airflow. The louvre would be aluminium and have a height of 1200mm and a width of 600mm.

Consultations & Notification Responses

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

Environmental Health – No objection subject to a condition in relation to plant acoustics.

Historic England – No objection.

Planning History

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

144969/LO/2026 - Listed Building Consent for installation of 1no. louvre, 1no. roof-mounted air conditioning unit and associated internal alterations – Application pending consideration.

143736/LO/2025 - Listed building consent for the installation of rooftop gantry and associated works – Approved October 2025.

143735/FO/2025 - Installation of rooftop gantry and associated works – Approved October 2025.

138994/LO/2024 - Refurbishment of the Rutherford Building including alterations to internal layout, services and finishes, alongside external repair, addition of ventilation grilles and sustainability measures including replacement of window casements and glass, and insertion of roof insulation – Approved May 2024.

138993/FO/2024 - Refurbishment of the Rutherford Building including alterations to internal layout, services and finishes, alongside external repair, addition of ventilation grilles and sustainability measures including replacement of window casements and glass, and insertion of roof insulation – Approved May 2024.

138277/LO/2023 - Listed building consent for repair, part removal and reinstatement of areas of floors and ceilings, and alteration of internal partitions – Approved February 2024.

108895/LO/2015/C1 - LISTED BUILDING CONSENT for Internal alterations to subdivide a first floor office – Approved July 2015.

106421/LO/2014/C1 - LISTED BUILDING CONSENT Internal alterations to include Installation of glazed screen and doors, re- forming an existing opening to create a new reception area, removal and replacement of modern partition – Approved September 2014.

Policy

The Places for Everyone Plan - Joint Development Plan Document, for nine of the 10 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

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

- Policy SP1 – Spatial Principles
- Policy CC9 – Design and Heritage
- Policy EN1 – Design Principle and Strategic Characters Areas
- Policy EN3 – Heritage
- Policy DM1 – Development Management

The Unitary Development Plan for Manchester – For the reasons outlined below the following saved UDP Policies are of relevance to this application:

- Policy DC19 – Listed Buildings
- Policy DC26 – Development and Noise

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Chapter 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Chapter 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Draft National Planning Policy Framework (2025)

The government has published a consultation National Planning Policy Framework which is intended to improve housebuilding rates through a clearer, more predictable and faster policy basis for decision and plan making. Whilst this is a draft NPPF for consultation it is considered that the development proposals are in accordance with the general thrust of policy contained within it.

Other Legislative Requirements

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Issues

Principle of the Development

The proposal would see the external alteration of a property in educational use (Class F1(a)) in order to provide improved amenities. The Rutherford Building is currently undergoing extensive repair and renovation works, designed at allowing the building to continue to function as a key asset within the University of Manchester’s estate. As part of this, it is important to secure proper amenities in the interest of truly modernising the building. In line with this, it is considered that the proposed works would assist in keeping the Rutherford Building in an active educational use, and thus the proposal complies with Places for Everyone Plan Policies JP-Strat1 and JP-Strat2 and Core Strategy Policies SP1 and DM1 in principle subject to the matters discussed below.

Visual Amenity and Heritage

The Rutherford Building, as existing, features no external condenser units no air inlet and outlet points. It is acknowledged that the proposed development would therefore introduce development currently alien to the listed building. Notwithstanding this, the flat roof is a largely screened section of the property, sitting lower than multiple of the property's ridges, additionally the gable end to have the louvre installed within is heavily obscured by other built development. On the basis that both the proposed louvre and air conditioning unit would be near entirely screened from views along the public highway, and would be reversible, the proposal is considered would cause a very low level of less than substantial harm to significance of the Grade II listed Rutherford Building, though this would be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal, being that the property's amenities would be modernised. Thus, the proposal is in accordance with Places for Everyone Plan Policy JP-P2, Core Strategy Policies CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1, and the National Planning Policy Framework, and the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Residential Amenity

The application site is located within the University of Manchester campus, where most neighbouring development is within office or educational use. The submission has been accompanied by an acoustic study that states that the development will be able to be accommodated without detriment to neighbouring amenity. Environmental Health do not dispute the findings of the report and do not object to the proposal subject to a condition that would require a verification report to ensure the agreed levels within the acoustic report are complied with post installation. Subject to such a condition, the development is acceptable in this regard and accords with Core Strategy Policy DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policy DC26 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conclusion

In light of the above and subject to appropriate planning condition, it has been found that the development is acceptable and is therefore in accordance with Places for Everyone Plan Policies JP-Strat1, JP-Strat2 and JP-P2, Core Strategy Policies SP1, CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies DC19 and DC26, 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 acted positively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against relevant planning policies and all material considerations. The nature of the scheme has not necessitated further discussions with the applicant. On this basis it is decided to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Conditions to be attached to decision for approval

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:

- o 0005-RBUM-ARC-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0005 Revision P6: Site Plan
- o 10893-WML-XX-03-DR-S-0015 Revision C01: Roof D Stair Enclosure Strengthening Details
- o 2464-RBUM-ARC-XX-RL-DR-A-2464: Monodraught (Received 06/02/2026)
- o 2464-RBUM-ARC-XX-RL-DR-A-2465: Proposed Roof Plan & Elevation (Received 06/02/2026)

- o Design & Access Statement (Prepared by Arcadis; Received 06/02/2026)
- o Heritage Impact Assessment (Prepared by Donald Insall Associates)
- o Heritage Statement Addendum (Received 06/02/2026)
- o Noise Planning Report (Prepared by Sandy Borwn; Report Reference 22682-R04-A; Dated 02/02/2026; Received 06/02/2026)
- o PUZ-ZM60VHA2 Mr Slim Power Inverter Outdoor Unit Single Phase R32
- o Ventsair Façade Product Specification

Stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 16/01/2026, unless otherwise specified.

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) a) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the measures put forward within the submitted Noise Planning Report (Prepared by Sandy Borwn; Report Reference 22682-R04-A; Dated 02/02/2026; Received 06/02/2026).

b) Prior to the first use of the approved plant, a verification report, which will include post-completion testing, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to validate that the plant equipment achieves a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level in each octave band at the nearest noise sensitive location.

c) In the event of non-conformity with a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level in each octave band, then any measures/changes required to achieve conformity shall be carried out. Any required measures/changes and verification shall continue until conformity has been achieved and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, before the use can commence.

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 policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy and saved policy DC26 of the UDP.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Environmental Health
Historic England (North West)

Pinc College, Manchester Museum, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL
University Of Manchester, Beyer Building, Dover Street, Manchester, M13 9PL
Manchester Museum, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL

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
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL