MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no.	144531/LO/2025
Date registered valid:	14 November 2025
Proposal:	Listed Building Consent for waterproofing works to address water leaks within lock wall.
Address:	Rochdale Canal Lock Number 88, To East Of Oxford Street , Manchester, M1 6FT
Ward(s):	Piccadilly Ward
Applicant:	Mr Adrian Dowd Canal & River Trust
Agent (if any):	
Case officer:	Michael Pearson Tel: 0161 219 2735 Email: michael.pearson@manchester.gov.uk
Recommendation:	Approve

Date of recommendation: 17/12/2025

Application details

Type of application: Listed Building Consent

Development type: Listed building alteration

Date of site visit:

Standard consultations:
Printed: 20 November 2025 Expired: 11 December 2025

Neighbour notifications
Printed: 20 November 2025 Expired: 11 December 2025

Site notice
Posted: 21 November 2025 Expired: 12 December 2025

Press advert
Published: 25 November 2025 Expired: 16 December 2025

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

The application relates to Rochdale Canal Lock 88, a Grade II listed structure that forms one of nine canal locks that provide access from the Rochdale Canal basin to the Bridgewater Canal basin in Castlefield. The lock dates from 1804-1805 and is completed in coursed squared sandstone, with wooden gates and balance beams. The lock is now leaking water onto the neighbouring towpath, leading to its closure.

Listed building: Grade II

Conservation area: Whitworth Street Conservation Area 1985

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

Description of area

The neighbouring area lies within the heart of Manchester City Centre, with the area featuring multiple arterial roads such as Oxford Street, Whitworth Street and Portland Street. Neighbouring built development is highly varied with properties of varying age, design, appearance and scale being located within the street scene. Uses within the area consist mainly of Class E retail and office uses, with some Sui Generis drinking establishment uses also present. The Rochdale Canal towpath is a key pedestrian and cycle route through the City Centre that links Castlefield to Ancoats and then continues north to Rochdale.

Description of development

The application seeks listed building consent for waterproofing works to address water leaks within the lock wall.

The proposed works would entail the raking out of existing mortar. Polyurethane would then be injected into the cavity created by the aforementioned works. Polyurethane is a plastic resin that solidifies into a foam like substance when contact is made with water.

Once the polyurethane works have been completed new mortar would be applied so that no polyurethane is visible.

Planning History

121595/LO/2018 - Listed Building Consent for extension to lock ladder, installation of bollards and widening of lock gate walkway – Approved December 2018.

107353/LO/2014/C2 - LISTED BUILDING CONSENT for the installation of additional cast iron bollards to the lockside – Approved March 2015.

105369/LO/2014/C2 - Listed Building Consent for installation of an oak load transfer beam applied to each tail gate, to ensure the existing timber gates do not cross when in use, therefore stabilising the mitre – Approved June 2014.

087008/VO/2008/C3 - CITY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT Retrospective Application for the installation of Heritage Trail signage at 10 no. locations along the Rochdale Canal – Approved October 2008.

087331/LO/2008/C3 - LISTED BUILDING CONSENT Introduction of cill safety signage – Approved October 2008.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Publicity – A site notice and press notice were published. Neighbouring properties were notified of the works by letter. No representations were received.

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-G3 – River Valleys and Waterways
- Policy JP-P2 – Heritage

The Manchester Core Strategy – Development Plan Document 2012-2027 (“the Core Strategy”) as adopted by the City Council on the 11th of July 2012:
- Policy SP1 – Spatial Principles
- Policy CC1 – Primary Economic Development Focus: City Centre and Fringe
- Policy CC4 – Visitors – Tourism, Culture and Leisure
- Policy CC9 – Design and Heritage
- Policy CC10 – Places for Everyone
- Policy EC5 – East Manchester
- Policy EC6 – Central Park Strategic Employment Location
- Policy EN1 – Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas

- Policy EN3 – Heritage
- Policy DM1 – Development Management

Saved Unitary Development Plan for Manchester – The following saved UDP Policies are of relevance to this application:
- Policy DC19 – Listed Buildings

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Chapter 16 – Conserving the Historic Environment

Other Legislative Requirements
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (LBCA Act) states that in considering whether to grant Listed Building Consent for any works the Local Planning Authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 66 of the LBCA Act requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings. This requires more than a simple balancing exercise and considerable importance and weight should be given to the desirability of preserving the setting.

Issues

Impact upon the Heritage Asset

Lock 88 of the Rochdale Canal forms the fifth out of nine locks that link Rochdale Canal basin to the Bridgewater Canal basin in Castlefield. The lock is not only just an impressive feat of engineering but an active method of transport through Manchester City Centre. More so, it is appreciated that the lock provides a physical link to the early urbanisation of Manchester and its industrial heritage, additionally, the lock has surviving original material and evidence of original construction that contributes further to its significance.

Notwithstanding the above, there is a significant leak in Lock 88's towpath side lock chamber, which in turn is leading to water spilling out onto the towpath, rendering it inaccessible and causing the towpath to be closed off in this section. This closure then requires users of the canal towpath to exit the towpath, cross Oxford Street and then rejoin the towpath off of Atwood Street. This leak not only poses an inconvenience to users of the canal but an issue to the long term health of the listed structure. The options available to address leaks within the lock are heavily constrained and consist of either draining and rebuilding the lock or utilising the proposed polyurethane solution. The use of lime mortar cannot be used due to the nature of the repair required, in that the damp environment caused by the leak would not allow for lime mortar to set, thereby rendering it ineffective. The rebuilding of the lock would be a costly solution that would encounter a very high degree of harm to be caused to the listed structure and as such is not considered a viable option to address the leak within the lock chamber.

In light of the above, the use of polyurethane is considered the only real viable option for repairing the lock chamber. It is acknowledged that within the submitted supporting information, it is noted that the use of polyurethane is a solution that has been utilised extensively across the UK's canal infrastructure, including on multiple listed structures. The proposed solution is considered would

incur a low level of less than substantial harm to be caused to the listed structure by virtue of the introduction of a modern material. In order to lessen this harm, it is considered necessary to condition the proposal so that mortar repair samples are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their installation.

The carrying out of the works is considered would also achieve a high amount of public benefit, securing the long term health of the listed lock, as well as allowing for the neighbouring towpath to reopen.

Heritage Assessment and Conclusion

The proposed development is considered would result in a low level of less than substantial harm to be caused to the listed structure. Notwithstanding this, a high level of public benefit would be brought about via its implementation, stemming from securing the long term health of the listed structure and allowing for a public towpath to reopen, which in this instance is considered would outweigh the recognised harm. Therefore, subject to appropriate planning condition, the proposal would meet the requirements as set out under Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and as such accord with Places for Everyone Plan Policies JP-Strat1, JP-Strat2, JP-G3 and JP-P2, Manchester Core Strategy Policies SP1, CC1, CC4, CC9, CC10, EC5, EC6, EN1, EN3 and DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policy DC19, 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 polices 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 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents:

- Location Plan (Planning Portal Reference PP-14451884v1)
- Design and Access Statement (Prepared by Canal & River Trust)
- Heritage Statement (Prepared by Canal & River Trust)
- Photographic Survey (Prepared by Canal & River Trust)

Stamped as received by the Local Planning Authority on 14/11/2025.

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.

3) The works to the listed lock hereby approved, shall be carried out in accordance with the methodology outlined within the submitted Design and Access Statement and Heritage Statement (Both prepared by Canal & River Trust), both stamped as received by the Local Planning Authority on 14/11/2025.

Reason - In the interests of preserving and protecting the historic character and appearance of the listed building in accordance with policies CC9 and EN3 of the Manchester Core Strategy, saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4) Prior to the commencement of any mortar and/or stone reinstatement works, mortar repair samples for the making good of the listed lock shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason - In the interests of preserving and protecting the historic character and appearance of the listed building in accordance with policies CC9 and EN3 of the Manchester Core Strategy, saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Heritage & Urban Design

95 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6ET
Eighth Floor, St James Buildings, 79 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6FQ
83 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6EG
St James Court, Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6FQ
First Floor Suite 7, St James Court, Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6FQ
Suite 1, St James Court, Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6FQ
Third Floor, St. James Building, 79 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6FQ
Fifth Floor, St James Buildings, 79 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6EQ
87 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6EG
Seventh Floor, St. James Building, 79 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6HT
91 - 93 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6ET
Fourth Floor, St. James Building, 79 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6HT
81 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6EG
The Stage Door, 97 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6ET
First Floor Suite 2, St James Court, Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6FQ
Sixth Floor, St. James Building, 79 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6HT
First Floor Suite 8-9, St James Court, Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6FQ
First Floor, St James Building, 79 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6PP
Ground Floor, St James Buildings, 79 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6FQ
85 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6ET
Ninth Floor, St James Buildings, 79 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6FQ

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
Conservation Area - Whitworth Street Conservation Area 1985
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (More) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL