

1 Kelso Place
Manchester
M15 4LE

Site ID: 30309

Heritage Statement

February 2026



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report has been prepared to determine the potential for harm to heritage interest derived from proposals to install commercial telecommunications equipment on the roof of 1 Kelso Place. The issue for consideration is the potential for harm to the heritage significance of the Castlefield Conservation Area in which the building is located, and the neighbouring Grade II listed building, Hulme Lock, derived from intrusion into its setting.

1.2 Inspections were undertaken in February 2026 to gain an understanding of the building and the surrounding area, and the likely impacts of the proposals. In accordance with the NPPF, this document and the research that informs it is proportionate to the asset's importance. This document aims to provide the Local Planning Authority with the information necessary to make an informed decision regarding the proposals.

2.0 HERITAGE APPRAISAL

2.1 This section of the report responds to the requirements as set out in paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Under the heading "Proposals Affecting Heritage Assets" it states:

2.2 "In determining applications, 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 proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation."

2.3 Annexe 2: Glossary of the NPPF defines significance as follows:

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

2.4 Annexe 2: Glossary of the NPPF defines setting as follows:

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance further define setting as:

"Definition of the setting of a significant place will normally be guided by the extent to which material change within it could affect (enhance or diminish) the place's significance."

2.5 THE PROPOSALS BUILDING

The proposals building comprises a late 20th century high-rise modern structure which is of no heritage significance as defined by the NPPF. The building does not contribute to the heritage interest of the Grade II listed building or the conservation area in a positive manner. As is often the case with modern city centre development, the proposal's building is a prominent detraction from the historic built environment in which it resides.

2.7 THE LISTED BUILDING (HULME LOCK)

2.8 The grade two listed building is described as follows by Historic England:

2.9 **SUMMARY:** A branch canal of 1838 with modifications of 1962, comprising a canal arm and lock constructed in a combination of coursed sandstone masonry and brick with mass concrete.

2.10 REASONS FOR DESIGNATION:

*Historical importance: this branch canal formed an important, and from 1922 to 1995 the only, connection between major commercial waterways, part of a significant transport network which contributed to the success of Manchester as a major centre of the industrial revolution at an international level. Its rapid construction in response to the commencement of a rival venture demonstrates the commercial competition and entrepreneurial spirit of the time.

*Intactness: the survival of the original route, original lock pounds (now only partly visible) and an early pair of lock gates at the Bridgewater Canal entrance comprise a good degree of intactness.

*Later additions: the 1962 additions illustrate an evolution in the canal network required for continuing commercial viability in the C20.

2.11 HISTORY:

The Hulme Lock Branch Canal was constructed in 1838 to provide a link between the Mersey and Irwell Navigation (completed c.1734) and the Bridgewater Canal (completed c.1765), and hence open up connections with the Rochdale Canal (commenced 1794) on the eastern side of the city. In spite of the developing network of canals around Manchester, the lack of a direct link between the Mersey and Irwell Navigation and the Rochdale Canal meant that goods using both waterways had to be offloaded onto carts and carried across the city before being loaded back onto boats to continue their journey. This was costly and time-consuming, as well as a cause of congestion in the central streets. Proposals were made as early as 1799 but the canal wasn't commenced until 1838, after the Mersey and Irwell Navigation Company began their own Manchester and Salford Junction Canal for the same purpose. The Bridgewater Canal Company's Hulme Lock Branch Canal, connecting their canal with the River Irwell at the point

where the two waterways were at their closest, was shorter and opened the year before the Manchester and Salford. The two operated side by side until they came into the same ownership and the Junction canal was closed in 1922.

When it was first constructed, the branch canal included three locks, each having a height of 1.2m, between which there were passing basins. Two of the three locks were situated running parallel with the Bridgewater Canal, with a turning basin to the west and third lock at ninety degrees that discharged into the canalised River Medlock as it joined the River Irwell. In the early C20 a swing bridge was added over the lock nearest to the Bridgewater Canal, pivoting on the south side. The Bridgewater Canal was acquired by the Manchester Ship Canal Company.

In the early 1960s, with the canal being heavily used for grain traffic from the docks to the Kellogg's factory at Trafford Park, the company replaced the three original locks with a single lock of around 3.6 metres lift. The canal and basin walls were increased in height in brick and concrete where necessary, and all but one pair of the former lock gates were removed. The stone walls and copings to the canal and basin mostly remain, although some sections of stonework were removed. The stone copings were chased out to receive the brick footings for the new retaining walls. One set of gates survived the alterations, which is situated at the junction with the Bridgewater Canal. This may have some original elements, but its fabric is mostly mid-late C20. It is fixed open, not having been used since the modifications took place.

The new retaining walls were constructed with an outer face of engineering bricks, which acted as shuttering to the mass concrete poured behind in lifts of 800mm. The brick wall footings were chased out of the masonry coping stones into which were driven 35mm dowel keys, and galvanised iron ties were fixed between brickwork and concrete and between successive lifts of concrete. The walls were finished with copings consisting of bullnose bricks on edge.

The canal basin had a new wall cut out of the sandstone, surmounted by a reinforced concrete coping. The new lock gates were built in the company's mechanical engineer's workshops. They were constructed of oak with greenheart heel and mitre posts, and each gate was provided with two hand-operated paddles. The sweeps consisted of rolled steel sections with cast iron balanced weights. Channels were cut in the existing masonry and built in the new brick walls to accommodate the paddle operating gear. The lock was opened to traffic at the beginning of December 1962.

In 1994 the Manchester Ship Canal was acquired by Peel Holdings. Hulme Lock Branch Canal was used until 1995. Since then it has not been navigable, although it serves a function as part of the water level control system within the canal network.

DETAILS: Branch canal of 1838 with modifications of 1962.

MATERIALS: sandstone, brick and concrete with timber and steel lock gates

PLAN: an east-west canal arm with a passing pound, with a turning basin to the west leading to a north-south lock to the north. The Hulme Lock Branch Canal links the Bridgewater Canal with the River Medlock at the point where it meets the River Irwell.

CANAL ARM WITH PASSING POUND: the branch canal meets the Bridgewater Canal at an acute angle, forming a rounded ended promontory between the two, with three metal mooring bollards; both are still in water. The side wall of the Bridgewater Canal is coffered with steel with a timber coping above, and concrete to the walls and surface of the tip of the promontory. Approximately two metres from the tip of the promontory is a pair of lock gates, fixed open; these are of oak with steel sweeps. From here the promontory surfacing changes to sandstone flags. The side walls of the junction lock, which is approximately four metres wide, are of squared sandstone blocks. Approximately eight metres from the gates the top course of the left wall returns at ninety degrees to follow the outline of the sunken emplacement for a former swing bridge; the recess is blocked with concrete at the water's edge. Beyond this, recesses in both walls mark the former location of the inner lock gates. From here the walls change to engineering bricks with bullnose copings. Approximately thirty five metres from the entrance the arm widens to form a passing pound on the right hand side, twenty five metres in length and four metres wide.

TURNING BASIN: approximately ninety five metres from the entrance the right hand wall continues but the left hand wall opens out to create a basin approximately twenty five metres square, set at approximately forty five degrees to the arm. Here the walls are of concrete.

LOCK AND GATES: in the far right corner a lock leads off to the right, underneath the arches of two parallel railway viaducts. There is a closed set of timber lock gates at the entrance, where the walls change back to engineering brick with bullnose copings, with recesses to accommodate the gates when open. The gates are painted timber with rolled steel sweeps and cast iron balances. This lock has a fall of approximately three and a half metres, and the bottom third of this is walled in squared sandstone blocks with engineering brick above and bullnose brick copings. The outer gates are half open and of the same design as the inner gates. The lock walls terminate with rounded ends topped with metal safety railings.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: Outside the outer gates a steel bridge spans the lock, while inside them a steel gantry oversails with a mobile attaching point; this is reportedly lifting gear from the 1962 alterations, left in situ. Metal ratcheted winches for closing the outer gates are found on both sides of the lock, but for the inner gates only the left hand one is extant. These form part of the listed building.

2.13 As described above in the official listing description, the heritage interest of the lock is derived from its illustrative material form, design, age and its contribution to the rich heritage of the industrial development of Manchester. This interest is appreciated primarily when walking around the lock at ground level and from other elevated nearby vantage points which are not obstructed by dense development. The lock derives some significance from its setting via the brick-built railway arches directly north, however, this is marred to some degree by the presence of modern additions and modern railway paraphernalia. Elsewhere, given the extent of modern development around the lock, little significance is derived from its setting.

2.14 CASTLEFIELD CONSERVATION AREA

2.15 There does not appear to be a conservation area appraisal which is readily available online, however the Manchester City Council's website provides the following summary of the conservation area:

2.16 The Castlefield area has evolved bit by bit over a very long period of time. Innovations have proliferated here and artefacts have been constructed where they were needed. The Romans built their fort on elevated ground, partly protected by the rivers Irwell and Medlock. Canals were dug where natural water courses could be diverted to maintain water levels. Canal basins and wharves were so numerous by the time the railways were built that the only practical means of introducing railway transport was by building viaducts. The result is a multi-level environment which is unique in the world.

By 1850 there were distinct zones devoted to housing, warehouses and transport. Liverpool Road was an important highway, sloping gently down to the River Irwell, whilst the area occupied by the Roman road, connecting the fort with the north, had been re-developed for other uses. Deansgate now occupies the site of this road.

At the east end of Liverpool Road the small-scale buildings on the south side are the residue of housing, most buildings having now been converted to commercial uses. Late 18th and 19th-century housing to the north of Tonman Street has been replaced by modern housing.

Although the variety of building materials used in Castlefield is very wide, it tends to be more rugged and industrial in character than in other parts of the city centre. Stone, brick and slate are used extensively, but the most impressive building components are the massive cast-iron columns supporting the railway viaducts and, of course, the viaducts themselves, which are constructed of iron lattice beams. When the quays and canal branches were used for loading, unloading and transporting goods, they needed to be durable and resistant to the heavy pounding of horses' hooves and the iron rims of wagon wheels. Granite setts were therefore used as they were the most durable material available. After many years of use, the top surfaces became smooth and rounded.

2.17 As described above, the heritage interest of the conservation area is derived from a diverse collection of historic and largely industrial buildings, together with the canal system and the railway viaducts and bridges, which provide the collective heritage interest and basis for designation as a CA. The conservation area also includes many modern buildings of varying degrees of architectural quality, such as Kelso Place, which as previously described, contributes nothing in the way of heritage interest to the significance of either the listed building or the conservation area.

3.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

3.1 The local planning authority is required by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas when considering proposals for

change. In addition, the local planning authority is required by section 66(1) of the 1990 Act to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings when considering proposals that may harm heritage significance. The LPA must give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the significance of the listed buildings.

3.2 For the purposes of this assessment, preservation equates to an absence of harm. Harm is defined in paragraph 84 of Historic England's Conservation Principles as change which erodes the significance of a heritage asset.

3.3 The Setting of Heritage Assets (GPA 3), published by Historic England advises a staged approach to assessment in which Step 1 involves the identification of the relevant heritage assets (section 1), Step 2 establishes their significance (section 2), and Step 3 describes how the change within the setting of the assets might affect their significance (section 3). In cases where there is potential for a loss of significance, amounting to harm, Step 4 is engaged, requiring the discussion of mitigation.

3.4 Regarding step 3 above, the potential for harm may be considered twofold, as follows;

1. Impact upon the immediate setting of the listed building, including potential encroachment and intrusion into the views of heritage interest of the lock.
2. Intrusion into views of heritage interest within the conservation area.

3.5 In response to point 1. Given the position of the proposed communications equipment on the roof of the high-rise building at 1 Kelso Place, there will be limited intervisibility between the equipment and the listed lock structure. Whilst the aerials may be visible in views looking southwest from Egerton Street Bridge and east from Hulme Hall Road Bridge, they will not form a prominent or defining feature from these vantage points. The equipment will be mounted on the roof of a substantial pre-existing modern building and will be appreciable only at a distance, from which the heritage significance of the listed lock is not experienced in close architectural or historic detail. In this context, the proposal comprises a minor, high-level addition with a great degree of visual separation between the proposed equipment and the lock. Accordingly, harm to the heritage significance of the lock is unlikely to arise.

3.6 In response to point 2 above. Similarly, in relation to the conservation area, the proposed aerials and associated equipment will be positioned on the roof of a prominent modern high-rise building. The roofscape is already visible from numerous vantage points, including Egerton Street Bridge (including both north and south) and views southwest from the Worsley Mill canal towpath and from Hulme Hall Road Bridge. However, given the scale and prominence of the existing building and the comparatively modest height of the historic buildings which contribute to the interest of the conservation area, the equipment will be perceived against a backdrop of modern development. The principal views of heritage interest within the conservation area are largely experienced at street level and in relatively close proximity to the historic built fabric given the nature of dense development, of which a large portion is modern and high-rise. The proposed equipment will rarely feature within these primary experiential views due to the height of the host building and due to obstruction from the dense development. On that basis, the proposals will not give rise to harm to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The proposals have been assessed with specific reference to the statutory duties contained within Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

4.2 With regard to Section 66(1), which requires that special regard be had to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting, careful consideration has been given to the relationship between the proposed communications equipment and the listed lock structure. As set out above, intervisibility will be limited and experienced only at distance, with the equipment read against the roofscape of a substantial pre-existing modern high-rise building. The proposals do not interrupt or compete with key views of heritage interest, nor do they diminish the ability to appreciate the architectural or historic significance of the listed structure. The setting of the listed building will therefore be preserved.

4.3 With regard to Section 72(1), which requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area, this assessment found that the proposed equipment will rarely feature within the principal views of heritage interest. Where visible at a distance, the equipment will be perceived within an established context of modern high-rise development. The character and appearance of the conservation area will accordingly be preserved.

4.4 Paragraph 212 of the NPPF requires that great weight be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. Having applied that considerable weight in the assessment above, it is concluded that the proposals would not give rise to harm to the significance of either the listed building or the conservation area. The development therefore satisfies the statutory duties as above and national planning policy requirements.



Figure 1: Looking north east from Hulme Hall Road.



Figure 2: Looking east from Wodens footbridge.



Figure 3: Looking southeast from the western towpath of the River Irwell, from next to the Riverside building.



Figure 4: Looking south from Regent Bridge



Figure 5: Looking southeast from the Trinity Way junction.



Figure 6: Looking southwest from the Egerton Street Bridge.



Figure 7: Looking northeast from the Bridgewater Canal tow path.

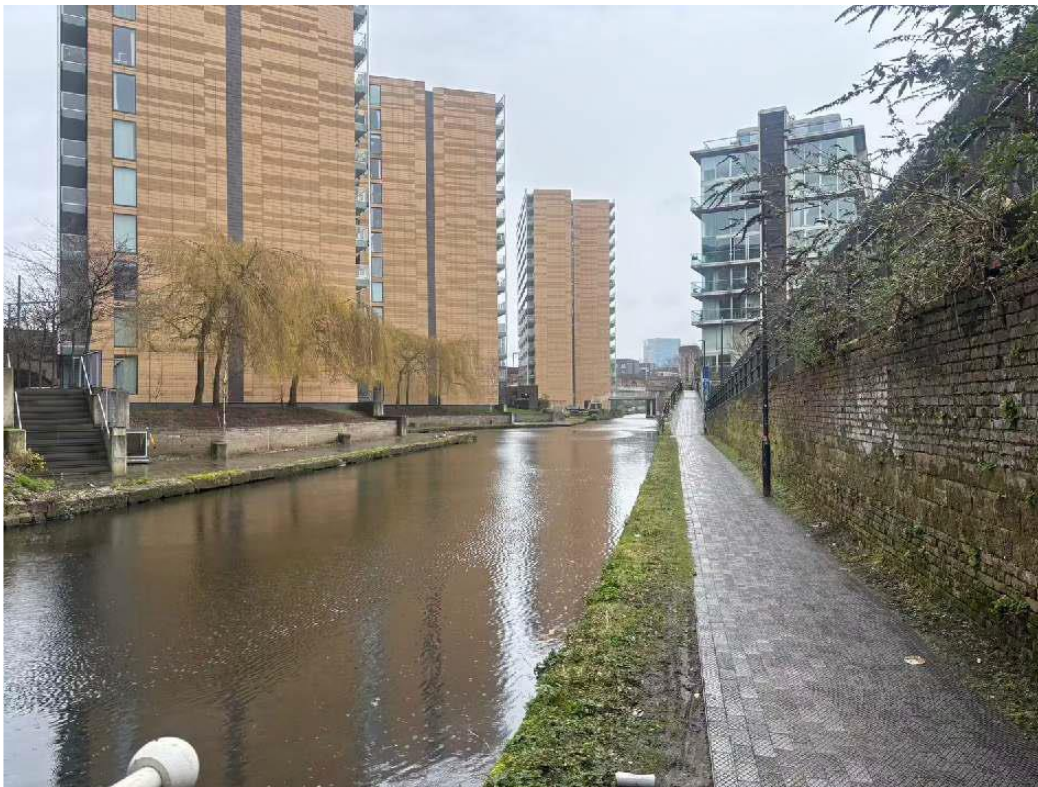


Figure 8: Looking northeast from the Bridgewater Canal tow path, beneath Hulme Hall Road Bridge.