MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no.	144306/FO/2025
Date registered valid:	3 November 2025
Proposal:	Replacement of 1No. roof mounted air conditioning condenser.
Address:	1 - 5 St Ann's Square, Manchester, M2 7EF
Ward(s):	Deansgate Ward
Applicant:	Mr Richard Gillis URBN UK Ltd
Agent (if any):	Mr Richard Stooke apt Design Ltd
Case officer:	Sam Elliott Tel: 0161 219 2856 Email: sam.elliott@manchester.gov.uk
Recommendation:	Approve
Date of recommendation:	27/11/2025

Application details

Type of application: Full Application Consent

Development type: Minor Other

Date of site visit: 06 November 2025

Standard consultations:
Printed: 6 November 2025 Expired: 27 November 2025

Neighbour notifications
Printed: 6 November 2025 Expired: 27 November 2025

Site notice
Posted: 6 November 2025 Expired: 27 November

Press advert
Published: 11 November 2025 Expired: 2 December 2025

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

1-5 St Anns Square belongs to the Grade II listed Royal Exchange, a large rectangular former trading hall penetrated by east-west arcade at ground floor and enclosing a central atrium at first floor. The building's significance derives from its classical architectural style, featuring two attic storeys in a mansard roof, a Baroque turret and domes at corners, channelled rusticated piers, massive entablature and modillioned cornice and balustraded parapet.

The roof features modern renovations including areas designated for plant and equipment associated with the use below.

Listed building: Grade II

Conservation area: St Anns Square Conservation Area 1970

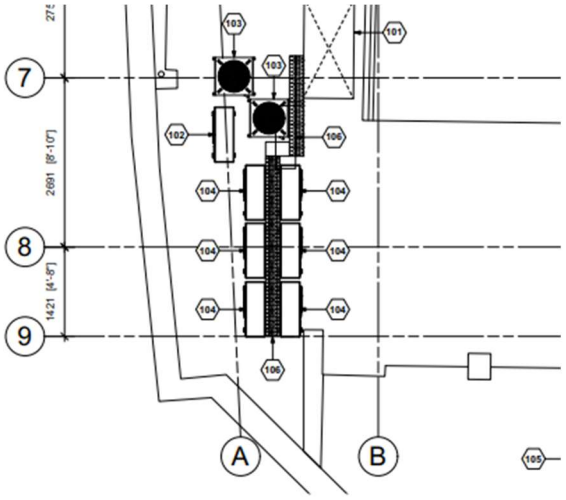
Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

Description of area

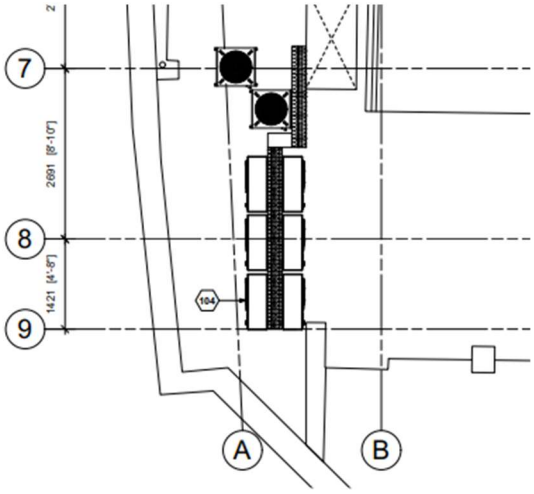
The site is positioned where Exchange Street joins St Anns Square. The route is a pedestrianised and predominantly commercial thoroughfare linking St Anns Square to Market Street. It also falls within the St Anne's Conservation Area and makes a positive contribution to the character of the area. Within its vicinity are the Grade II listed nos. 16, 18 and 20, 22 St Ann's Square, Mansfield Chambers, Boer War Memorial, and the Cobdens Statue, as well as the Grade II* listed no.25 St Ann Street.

Description of development

Planning permission is sought for the proposed removal of 1no. existing air conditioning unit and replacement of another unit with 1no. proposed air conditioning unit.



1 ROOF TOP PLAN
EX120 SCALE 1:50 @ A1



1 ROOF TOP PLAN
PL120 SCALE 1:50 @ A1

The condenser will be installed on the existing freestanding foot system approximately 1.5 metres behind the roof parapet. There would be no new roof fixings or penetrations required.

The new unit will be connected to the existing refrigerant pipework, no new pipework or containment is proposed.

The application is being considered alongside 144307/LO/2025 which seeks Listed building consent for the installation of rooftop plant. Direct physical impacts to the listed building are considered under this application and in terms of impact on heritage assets only the impact on setting of adjacent listed buildings and the character of the conservation area are considered here.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Notification:
Occupiers of neighbouring buildings were notified of the proposal via notification letters. No representations have been received.

Advertisement:
The application was advertised by site notice and in the local press as affecting a listed building and the character of a conservation area. No representations have been received.

Environmental Health:
No objection, subject to condition:

- Accepts the the KP Acoustics assessment dated 17th October 2025 reference 31272-PCR.01 RevA document findings showing plant, equipment and servicing shall be selected and/or acoustically treated in accordance with a scheme designed so as to achieve a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level at the nearest noise sensitive location. Requests validation report

Consultations & Notification Responses

Notification:
Occupiers of neighbouring buildings were notified of the proposal via notification letters. No representations have been received.

Advertisement:
The application was advertised by site notice and in the local press as affecting a listed building and the character of a conservation area. No representations have been received.

I-Urban:
No objections, no conditions recommended.

Policy Context

The following policies are considered relevant to this application:

Places for Everyone
- JP-Strat2 – City Centre
- JP-P1 – Sustainable Places
- JP-P2 – Heritage

The Adopted Core Strategy for the City of Manchester
- SP1 – Spatial Principles
- CC9 – Design and Heritage
- EN1 – Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas
- EN3 – Heritage
- DM1 – Development Management

The Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester
- DC18 – Conservation Areas
- DC19 – Listed Buildings
- DC26 – Development and Noise

NPPF
- Section 12 (Achieving Well Designed Places)
- Section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment)

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990
- Sections 66 and 72

Draft National Planning Policy Framework - 16th December 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. Of relevance to the application proposals the draft NPPF makes it clear that local planning authorities should amongst other things:

> -Work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner, where necessary seeking solutions to problems arising from initial proposals, to enable a timely decision.
>
> -Take account of planning matters raised during any pre-application engagement, including any positive responses to this engagement, as well as representations on the proposals.
>
> -Decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development and this means that for development within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any

adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.

- In considering proposals for development in town centres, substantial weight should be given to the benefits of: a. supporting the overall vitality and viability of the centre, including where this can be achieved through the diversification of uses, intensification and provision of residential accommodation; and improving or retaining access to local shops and other facilities which provide day-to-day services for the local community.

- Give substantial weight to the benefits where a development proposal would make better use of vacant and under-utilised land and buildings.

- Development proposals should make efficient use of land, proposals for residential and mixed-use development within settlements should contribute to an increase in the density of the area in which they are situated. The existing character of an area should be taken into account, but should not preclude development which makes the most of an area's potential.

- To respond to their context and create well-designed places development proposals should: respond to the history, character and features of the site and its setting, but should not preclude innovation and change where appropriate, especially where an increased scale or density of development is justified; Support healthy, mixed, vibrant and integrated communities, Use the pattern of buildings to define the arrangement of streets, squares and other spaces, promote compact forms of development, distinguish between public and private areas, create focal points and, where appropriate, enhance views into and out of the scheme; Include spaces that are safe, secure, inclusive, accessible for all ages and abilities and which facilitate and encourage social interaction, play and healthy lifestyles; and, create visually attractive, distinctive and characterful development to establish or maintain a strong sense of place and pride, including through the use of a coherent palette of materials, design features and planting.

- Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution, assessment and delivery of development proposals, including through any pre-application engagement; the local planning authority should not allow the quality of approved development to be materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes proposed following its initial approval.

Principle of Development

The application would see the removal of an air conditioning unit along with the replacement of another unit pursuant to the operations of the retail unit located within 1-5 St Anns Square. The proposal would result in negligible harm to setting of adjacent listed buildings and conservation area.

The proposal would not be visible from street level, within the Conservation Area or affect the settings of listed buildings in the vicinity. It is also acceptable with respect to plant noise.

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. As set out below, no adverse impacts have been identified through consideration of the application proposals that would outweigh a positive decision in this instance.

Issues

Impact on Heritage Assets and Visual Amenity

Given the proposal's siting away from the frontage to St Anns Square, it is considered that there would not be any detrimental visual impact on the street scene, impact on the character of the St Anne's Conservation Area or to the settings of any listed buildings in the vicinity.

Assessment of Harm

On the basis of the above it is considered that the proposal would have a neutral impact the setting of the conservation area and adjacent listed buildings. As such it is not necessary to weigh the proposal's impact against its public benefits as required by Section 16 of the NPPF.

In consideration of the above and subject to conditions, the proposed works are considered to not have an unacceptable adverse effect on setting of adjacent listed buildings or the character of the conservation area.

In addition on the above basis, the proposal is considered to meet the statutory test to preserve as required by Section 66 and S72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The proposal therefore complies with Places for Everyone Policies JP-P1, JP-P2 and JP-Strat2; Core Strategy Policies SP1, EN1, EN3, CC9, and DM1; and saved UDP Policies DC18 and DC19 as they relate to the impact on a listed building and setting of listed buildings and conservation areas, as well as Core Strategy Policies SP1 and DM1.

Impacts on Amenity from Noise

The applicant has submitted the Noise Impact Assessment (KP Acoustics assessment dated 17th October 2025 reference 31272-PCR.01 RevA) to assess the noise impact of the proposed plant.

Environmental Health have reviewed the above and are satisfied that the scheme is designed so as to achieve a rating level of 5dB (L_{Aeq}) below the typical background (L_{A90}) level at the nearest noise sensitive location. In the event of an approval, it is recommended that the scheme is carried out in accordance with the Noise Impact Assessment (KP Acoustics assessment dated 17th October 2025 reference 31272-PCR.01 Rev A). It is also recommended that this condition requires a further verification report to validate that the scheme has been carried out as approved.

Subject to the above, the proposal is considered to comply with Core Strategy Policies SP1, DM1 and saved UDP Policy DC26 as they relate to noise disamenity.

Conclusion

On the above basis, the proposal is considered to comply with Places for Everyone Plan Policies JP-Strat2, JP-P1 and JP-P2, policies SP1, CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012), saved UDP Policies DC18.1 and DC19.1 as well as meeting the statutory test to preserve as put forward under Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

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 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)

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, received by Manchester City Council as the Local Planning Authority on 20/10/2025:

EX001 [Location Plan]
EX002 [Site Block Plan]
PL120
PL320
the Noise Impact Assessment (KP Acoustics assessment dated 17th October 2025 reference 31272-PCR.01 RevA)

As well as the DESIGN, ACCESS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT REV A document received 02/10/2025

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. Pursuant to PfE Policies JP-Strat2, JP-P1, and JP-P2; Core Strategy policies SP1, CC9, EN1, EN3, and DM1; saved UDP policies DC18, DC19 and DC26; Sections 12 and 16 of the NPPF; and Sections 66 and 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990

3)

a) The installation of condenser units hereby approved will be carried out in accordance with the Noise Impact Assessment (KP Acoustics assessment dated 17th October 2025 reference 31272-PCR.01 Rev A) document. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full before first operation of the condenser units and shall remain operational thereafter.

b) Prior to the first operation of the condenser units, 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 condenser units achieve a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level 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 operation of the condenser 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

Fifth Floor, Acresfield, 8 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
15 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
Barbour, 6 St Ann's Square, Manchester, M2 7HD
First Floor, Acresfield, 8 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
16 - 18 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
9 Old Bank Street, Manchester, M2 7PE
Units 2 And 3, Acresfield, 8 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
Unit 1, Acresfield, 8 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
STARBUCKS COFFEE, Unit 4 At, 8 - 10 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
Acresfield, 10 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
Part Sixth Floor FRT, Acresfield, 10 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
Unit 5, Acresfield, 8 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
11 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
Ground Floor, Acresfield, 8 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
Fourth Floor And Fifth Floor, Acresfield, 10 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
Basement And; Ground Floor, 7 - 9 Old Bank Street, Manchester, M2 7PE
Sub Basement, 1 - 5 St Ann's Square, Manchester, M2 7EF
20 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
9 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
5 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
7 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
7 - 9 Old Bank Street, Manchester, M2 7PE
Third Floor, Acresfield, 10 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
First Floor, 8 - 10 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
Second Floor, Acresfield, 8 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
Sixth Floor, Acresfield, 8 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
31 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
12 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
10 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
8 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
6 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
4 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
3 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
5 Acresfield, 8 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
Unit 4, Acresfield, 8 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7HA
12 - 14 Cross Street, Manchester, M2 7AE
HSBC, 2 - 4 St Ann's Square, Manchester, M2 7HD
14 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
16 Cross Street, Manchester, M2 7AE
13 Old Bank Street, Manchester, M2 7PE
5 Old Bank Street, Manchester, M2 7PE
Watches Of Switzerland, 9 - 11 St Ann's Square, Manchester, M2 7EF
Lululemon, 7 St Ann's Square, Manchester, M2 7EF
19 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA
1 Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA

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 - St Anns Square Conservation Area 1970
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) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL