

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 144287/LO/2025
Date registered valid: 16 October 2025
Proposal: Listed Building Consent - Replacement custody windows at G Wing.
Address: HMP Manchester, Southall Street, Manchester, M3 1JL
Ward(s): Cheetham Ward

Applicant: Ministry Of Justice
Agent (if any): Mrs Claire Walker, Cushman & Wakefield
Case officer: Steven McCoombe
Tel: 0161 234 4607
Email: steven.mccoombe@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve
Date of recommendation: 27 November 2025

Application details

Type of application: Listed Building Consent

Development type: Listed building alteration

Date of site visit: 7 November 2025

Standard consultations:

Printed: 28 October 2025 Expired: 18 November 2025

Neighbour notifications

No neighbour notifications have been printed and sent.

Site notice

Posted: 7 November 2025 Expired: 28 November 2025

Press advert

Published: 4 November 2025 Expired: 25 November 2025

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

The application site relates to HMP Strangeways - a large brick built Victorian prison built circa 1868, which is Grade II listed. The building incorporates a panoptic layout and is bounded by Sherborne St to the north, Empire St to the east, Southall St to the south and Great Ducie St to the west. Adjoining the prison to the west is a single storey visitor's centre comprising a heptagonal building of a more recent architectural design. The prison was designed by Alfred Waterhouse – a prominent architect of his time and is dominated by a 71-metre-high ventilation tower. The prison comprises two main sections. The lower prison is of radial design with wings extending from a central rotunda. The upper prison is of a cruciform design, also with a central rotunda.

The site in this case specifically involves the cell windows of Block G.

Listed building: Grade II

Conservation area: No

Tree Preservation Order: No

Description of area

With the exception of the prison complex, the site is situated within the 'warehouse district' which is largely characterised by large warehouse buildings, cash and carry businesses, light industry and sporadic residential uses. The city centre is situated a short distance to the south.

Description of development

Listed Building consent is sought for the replacement of custody windows in G Wing. At present, the block features four different window types with varying fenestration designs across its

elevation. The proposal aims to replace all existing windows in G Wing with a single, consistent design, creating uniformity across the block's elevations.

The new windows are intended to enhance security by reducing the risk of drone attacks, eliminate areas where litter can accumulate, and compensate for the lack of openings through integrated ventilation provided by two perforated panels on either side.

Each window is to feature a white aluminium frame and be designed to fit the existing openings without requiring substantial filler pieces. The upgrade to G Wing is being brought forward ahead of a wider application to replace custody windows across all other accommodation blocks.

The application is accompanied by an application for planning permission for the same works (144286/FO/2025).

Consultations & Notification Responses

Local residents/occupiers - No representations received.

Policy

The below policy and guidance is relevant to the consideration of this application:

- Policies DM1, EN3 and SP1 of the Manchester Core Strategy; -
- Saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester;
- Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan – Policies JP-P1 and JP-P2;
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Sections, 3, 4 and 16.

Issues

Principle

The proposed works are considered essential to allow for necessary upgrades in direct response to the findings of the most recent inspection report of the prison. These upgrades aim to enhance security measures, specifically to deter and prevent the entry of illicit items into the prison. The development aligns with the overarching objective of safeguarding public safety, as supported by Policies DM1 and SP1 of the Core Strategy and Policy JP-P1 of the Places for Everyone framework. Furthermore, it is consistent with national guidance outlined in paragraphs 101–102 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which emphasises the importance of modernising public infrastructure and addressing broader security needs by reducing vulnerability, strengthening resilience, and ensuring the safety and security of the public. Planning decisions should therefore acknowledge and support development that is necessary for operational security purposes.

Whilst it is recognised that the proposed works would result in a degree of harm to the heritage significance of the host Listed Building, this impact is considered to justifiable in this case. The harm is outweighed by the substantial public safety benefits, including the creation of a safer working environment for staff and the reinforcement of standards appropriate for a high-security prison. These considerations reflect a balanced and proportionate approach to heritage conservation in the context of pressing operational and security requirements.

Heritage Impact

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a statutory duty on decision-makers to give special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building, its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest when considering planning applications that may affect them.

Local policy reinforces this requirement.

Core Strategy Policy EN3 requires assessment of the impact of new development on heritage assets, saved UDP Policy DC19.1 seeks to preserve and enhance listed buildings, stating that consent will not be granted for alterations or additions that would adversely affect their architectural or historic character and policy JP-P2 of Places for Everyone similarly requires proposals affecting designated or non-designated heritage assets and their settings to be considered in line with national policy.

National guidance is set out in Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

Paragraph 208 requires authorities to identify and assess the significance of any heritage asset affected by a proposal and to take this into account to avoid or minimise conflict between conservation and development.

Paragraph 214 states that where development would cause substantial harm or total loss of significance to a designated heritage asset, consent should be refused unless the harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits or meets specific exceptional criteria.

Paragraph 215 advises that where harm is less than substantial, this should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing the asset's optimum viable use.

Paragraph 216 requires a balanced judgment for proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets, considering the scale of harm and the asset's significance.

In this case, the proposed replacement windows have been designed with functionality as the primary consideration, prioritising security and preventing drone access to individual cells.

The existing windows are modern replacements, meaning that much of the original historic fabric was lost during previous interventions. Whilst the proposed design is robust and its detailing appears visually assertive, this approach is necessary given the current operational challenges and the vulnerabilities of the existing windows. Although a more refined design that better reflects the original aesthetic would be desirable, the circumstances demand a stronger, more secure solution.

Despite the visual impact, there is a compelling justification for the proposal. The installation will deliver significant public benefits in terms of safety and security, which are considered to outweigh the heritage impact. In this instance, the level of harm is assessed as less than substantial.

On this basis, the proposal is considered acceptable, and the impact on the heritage significance of the Listed building and its setting is considered sustainable. Conditions are included within the accompanying Listed Building Consent application to secure details relating to the specified white finish, mortar samples, and pointing, which must be agreed prior to implementation.

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

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

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:

17280 01.A3 (site location plan), 17280 12.A1 (proposed site plan), 17280 13.A0 (proposed G wing elevations), 17280 14.A1 (proposed typical window), 17280-CHA-ZZ-XX-DR-S-001 (proposed window fixing details), 17280-CHA-ZZ-XX-DR-S-002 (proposed remedial works), X09135-01-C (proposed window plate elevation), X09135-10-D (window assembly details), X09135-11-D (window section) and X09135-12-C (enlarged window section), received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 16 October 2025.

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, pursuant to policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy, saved policy DC19 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3) The window frames shall be coloured Hipca White (RAL 9910) unless otherwise agreed in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority.

To minimise the visual harm to the Listed Building, pursuant to policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy, saved policy DC19 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4) No mortar repair works shall commence until a sample repair and full pointing details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority. The works shall then be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, pursuant to policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy, saved policy DC19 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Heritage & Urban Design

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints