MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no.	144758/FO/2025
Date registered valid:	12 December 2025
Proposal:	Installation of 1no. roof mounted air conditioning unit.
Address:	Freetrade Exchange, 37 Peter Street, Manchester, M2 5GB
Ward(s):	Deansgate Ward
Applicant:	Clearbell Capital LLP
Agent (if any):	Mr Don Murphy Paul Butler Associates
Case officer:	Michael Pearson Tel: 0161 219 2735 Email: michael.pearson@manchester.gov.uk
Recommendation:	Approve

Date of recommendation: 21/01/2026

Application details

Type of application: Full Application Consent

Development type: Minor Other

Date of site visit:

Standard consultations:
Printed: 17 December 2025 Expired: 10 January 2026

Neighbour notifications
Printed: 17 December 2025 Expired: 10 January 2026

Site notice
Posted: 19 December 2025 Expired: 12 January 2026

Press advert
Published: 23 December 2025 Expired: 16 January 2026

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

The application relates to the roof of the Grade II listed Freetrade Exchange, formerly known as Harvester House. The application property is a former merchant's warehouse, with a drinking establishment use approved at ground floor (Sui Generis), a restaurant use situated within its basement (Class E(b)) and its upper floors lying in office uses. The upper floors of the Freetrade Exchange were subject to low occupancy rates but are now undergoing multiple fitouts to allow for new office occupiers at the fourth floor, with the fit out of the ground and first floors having recently been completed. The application property is bound by Peter Street, Southmill Street and Bootle Street. The property itself dates from the mid-19th century and is completed in sandstone. Its front elevation features a contemporary powder coated modern metal entrance on the property's south-western corner, with a traditional style timber door on its south-eastern corner. Where the property's western facing side elevation extends beyond the front elevation of no35 Peter Street it features a rendered mount at ground floor. The property's roof is home to a modern roof extension, PV panels and external plant are then situated largely on its western half.

Listed building: Grade II

Conservation area: Deansgate Conservation Area 1985

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

Description of area

The neighbouring area lies within the heart of the City Centre, with St Peter's Square lying under 175m away from the application site to the east. Peter Street is characterised by a high number of historic listed buildings in various commercial uses, this includes the Grade II listed Lancashire House, Royale Club, and Albert Memorial, as well as the Grade II* listed Free Trade Hall that lies opposite the application site. The application site lies within the Deansgate Conservation Area

and lies adjacent to the St Peters Conservation Area. More modern development lies to the south-west of the application site in the form of Petersfield House at no35 Peter Street, Great Northern Square and no36 Peter Street.

Description of development

The application seeks planning permission for the installation of a single condenser unit to the property's roof.

The proposed unit would have a height of 1300mm, a width of 1050mm and a depth of 380mm. The unit would be situated adjacent to an existing condenser unit and would be set back a minimum of 4.5m from the edge of the property's roof.

The proposed condenser unit would serve the property's third floor office space, who's fit out is currently under consideration under application 144759/LO/2025.

Planning History

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

144759/LO/2025 - Listed Building Consent for the installation of internal partitions to third floor and installation of 1no. roof mounted air conditioning unit – Application pending consideration.

143837/JO/2025 - Variation of condition 2 (approved Dwgs) attached to Listed Building Consent referenced 142152/LO/2025 to amend location of air conditioning units – Approved October 2025.

143842/NMC/2025 - Non-material amendment to planning permission 142151/FO/2025 to allow for slight relocation of approved plant unit – Approved September 2025.

142152/LO/2025 - Listed building consent for installation of 1no condenser to roof – Approved April 2025.

142151/FO/2025 - Installation of 1no condenser unit to roof – Approved April 2025.

141553/LO/2024 - LISTED BUILDING CONSENT for the installation of internal partitions and alterations at fourth floor level – Approved January 2025.

140712/LO/2024 - LISTED BUILDING CONSENT for the installation of internal partitions and alterations at ground and first floor levels – Approved October 2024.

137821/LO/2023 - Listed Building Consent for internal works comprising of installation of kitchen, extract equipment and internal partitions, and external works for the replacement of glazed entrance with timber door, removal and replacement of feature lamps to entrance and installation of new plant to roof – Approved April 2024.

137820/FO/2023 - Creation of restaurant use at lower ground floor (Class E(b)) and external alterations comprising of removal of glazed entrance, installation of timber door replacement, replacement of external feature lamps, addition of menu boards, and new plant equipment to roof – Approved April 2024.

Consultations & Notification Responses

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

Environmental Health – No objection subject to a planning condition requiring the proposals to proceed in accordance with the submitted acoustic report and for a verification report to be submitted.

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-Stat1 – 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 EC2 – Existing Employment Space
- Policy EC3 – The Regional Centre
- Policy CC1 – Primary Economic Development Focus: City Centre and Fringe
- Policy CC9 – Design and Heritage
- Policy EN1 – Design Principle and Strategic Characters 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 DC18 – Conservation Areas
- Policy DC19 – Listed Buildings
- Policy DC26 – Development and Noise

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Chapter 16 – Conserving 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 Considerations
Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Issues

<u>Principle of the Development</u>

The application would see the installation of a single condenser unit on the roof of a Grade II listed building in the City Centre, to allow for the creation of an air conditioning system associated with a new office fit out to the third floor. It is considered the proposal would assist in delivering new high quality office space in a central location thereby assisting in the ongoing regeneration of the City Centre. The proposal therefore accords with Core Strategy Policies SP1, EC2, EC3, CC1 and DM1, and Places for Everyone Plan Policy JP-Start2 in principle subject to the matters discussed below.

Visual Amenity

The Freetrade Exchange is an ornate and architecturally impressive Victorian warehouse building. The property's roof in contrast to that of its elevations is a largely utilitarian space, with a contemporary roof top extension being situated atop the property that is then lined with multiple condenser units and extract equipment. In this regard the proposed development would not be an alien addition to the property's roof. Being set back a minimum of 4.5m away from the edge of the property's roof, the condenser unit would be screened from views along the public highway, only being visible from the upper floors of neighbouring taller buildings. On this basis the proposal would not cause an unacceptable impact on the local street scene in accordance with Core Strategy Policies SP1, EN1 and DM1, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Heritage

As previously stated within this report, the application concerns a Grade II listed building that lies within the Deansgate Conservation Area and neighbours multiple Grade II listed buildings, a Grade II* listed building and the St Peter's Square Conservation Area. The application site already features multiple condenser units atop its roof and multiple neighbouring listed buildings also feature roof top plant areas. On the basis the proposed development would be screened from public view, the proposal is considered would have a neutral impact on neighbouring heritage assets.

The application is therefore acceptable in this regard and therefore accords with Core Strategy Policies CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies DC18 and DC19, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Residential Amenity

The application site is situated on a commercial property that neighbours other properties in varying office and retail uses. The submission has been accompanied by an acoustic assessment that details that the proposal would be able to be accommodated without detriment to neighbouring amenity. Environmental Health do not object to the proposal subject to the submitted acoustic report being approved as part of the development and a planning condition requiring the submission of an acoustic verification report in order to ensure the development complies with the noise levels set out in the submitted acoustic report. 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 Core Strategy Policies SP1, EC2, EC3, CC1, CC9, EN1, EN3, and DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies DC18, DC19 and DC26, Places for Everyone Plan Policies, JP-Strat2 and JP-P2, National Planning Policy for

Waste, the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning (Listed Buildings 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 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:

- XXXX-CW-FE-ZZ-DR-I-0101: Site Location Plan
- 0000-CUB-XX-RL-DR-M-5001 Rev P02: Roof Level Air Conditioning Layout
- 0000-CUB-XX-RL-EL-M-5501 Rev P02: Proposed Elevation AA - BB Roof Level
- 0000-CUB-XX-RL-EL-M-5501 Rev P02: Proposed Elevation CC - DD Roof Level
- Design & Access Statement (Prepared by Cubic Works; Dated 03/11/2025)

o Covering Letter (Prepared by Paul Butler Associates; Dated 12/12/2025)
o Heritage Addendum (Prepared by Paul Butler Associates; Dated 12/12/2025)
o Noise Survey and Plant Noise Egress Assessment (Prepared by Sandy Brown; Report Reference 026824-R01-A; Dated 10/12/2025)
o PKA-M R32 Wall Mounted System Specification Sheet

Stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 12/12/2025.

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 and the National Planning Policy Framework

3) a) Externally mounted plant shall be installed in accordance with the submitted noise survey and plant noise egress assessment (Prepared by Sandy Brwon; Report No. 026824-R01-A; Dated 10/12/2025; Received 12/12/2025).

b) Prior to the first operation of the plant hereby approved, 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 achieves 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 approved plant can commence.

Reason - In order to safeguard the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties in accordance with Core Strategy Policy DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policy DC26 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Environmental Health

First And Second Floor, 35 Peter Street, Manchester, M2 5GD
10 Southmill Street, Manchester, M2 3NW
First Floor, Freetrade Exchange, 37 Peter Street, Manchester, M2 5GB
Fourth Floor, Freetrade Exchange, 37 Peter Street, Manchester, M2 5GB
Fifth Floor, Freetrade Exchange, 37 Peter Street, Manchester, M2 5GB
Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Peter Street, Manchester, M2 5GP
St Michaels Building, 36 Jacksons Row, Manchester, M2 5WD
Second Floor, Freetrade Exchange, 37 Peter Street, Manchester, M2 5GB
First Floor To Third Floor, 47 Peter Street, Manchester, M2 3NG
35 Peter Street, Manchester, M2 5GD
Ground Floor, 35 Peter Street, Manchester, M2 5GD
Fifth Floor, 35 Peter Street, Manchester, M2 5GD
Fourth Floor, 35 Peter Street, Manchester, M2 5GD
Third Floor, Freetrade Exchange, 37 Peter Street, Manchester, M2 5GB
47 Peter Street, Manchester, M2 3NG
Club Coliseum, Peter Street, Manchester, M2 3NQ

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 - Deansgate Conservation Area 1985
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL