MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no.	144307/LO/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:	17/12/2025

Application details

Type of application: Listed Building Consent

Development type: Listed building alteration

Date of site visit: 24 September 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 2025

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

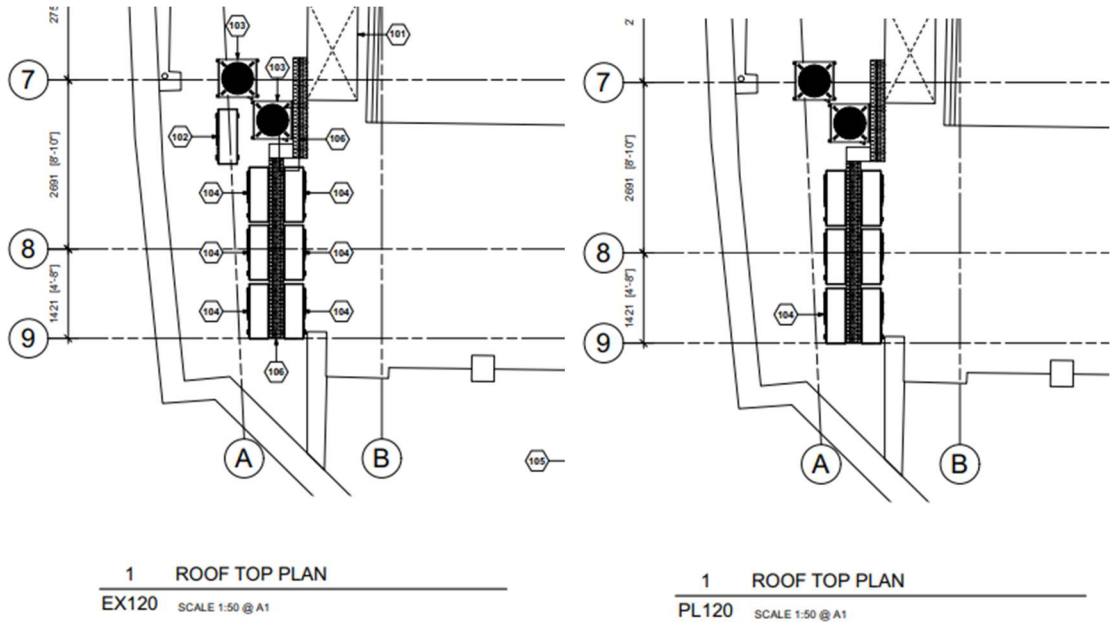
Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

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

Listed building consent is sought for the proposed removal of 1no. existing air conditioning unit and replacement of another unit with 1no. proposed air conditioning unit.



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 144306/FO/2025 which seeks planning permission for the installation of this rooftop plant. This application considers only the direct harm to the listed building and harm to the setting of adjacent listed buildings and the character of the conservation area is considered in the above planning application.

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

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

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990
- Section 16

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.

Issues

Impact upon the Heritage Asset

Given the proposed siting away from the frontage of the listed building onto St Anns Square, the proposal would not be visible within the street scene and would not be seen together with any of the building's architectural detailing which contribute to its significance.

With the net removal of the 1no. condenser unit outside of the main grouping of similar condenser units, the footprint of roof plant would be reduced and their position consolidated. The heritage statement also states that the proposal would utilise the existing pipework, containment and riser between the ground floor unit and the roof. As such the works further would result in negligible impact on historic fabric and would moreover be reversible, mitigating against permanent harm.

In consideration of the above, the proposed works are considered to result in negligible harm to the significance of the listed building.

Assessment of Harm

On the basis of the above it is considered that, the proposal would have a neutral impact on the listed building's significance. 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 the listed asset's architectural and historic character.

In addition on the above basis, the proposal is considered to meet the statutory test to preserve as required by Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Conclusion

On the above basis the proposal is considered to comply with the requirements set out in Places for Everyone Policies JP-Strat2, JP-P1, and JP-P2; Policies SP1, CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy; saved UDP policies DC18 and DC19; and sections 12 and 16 of the NPPF as well as meeting the statutory test to preserve required under Sections 16 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
Whilst there 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 above, no adverse

impacts have been identified through consideration of the application proposals that would outweigh a positive decision in this instance.

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

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

EX001 [Location Plan]
EX002 [Site Block Plan]
PL120

PL320
PL400

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 and DC19; Sections 12 and 16 of the NPPF; and Section 16 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Heritage & Urban Design

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 (Middle) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Middle) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL