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Bourne House, Cores End Road
Bourne End, Buckinghamshire, SL8 5AR
Tel: 01628 532244
Email: bourne.end@walsingplan.co.uk
Web: www.walsinghamplanning.co.uk

**Our Ref: B0063/25**

07 November 2025

Manchester City Council
Planning Department
PO Box 532
Manchester
M60 2LA

Via the Planning Portal

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Application for planning permission and listed building consent**
**Premier Inn Hotel, 112-114 Portland Street, Manchester M1 4WB**
**Planning Portal ref. PP-14050956**

**Planning, Heritage, Design & Access Statement**

On behalf of Premier Inn Hotels Ltd. please find enclosed an application for planning permission and listed building consent at the above site for the following development:

> *"Removal of existing rooftop plant and installation of new replacement plant within a new timber louvred enclosure."*

This application comprises the following documents:

- This covering letter (the Planning, Heritage, Design & Access Statement)
- Site Location Plan
- Drawings comprising:
  - 701 P01 Existing Mechanical Plant Services Layout
  - 702 P01 Proposed Mechanical Plant Services Layout
  - 900 T1 Building Elevations Mechanical Plant Services
- Noise Assessment Report

A fee for the amount of £1,277.00 has been paid online via the Planning Portal.

**Site & Surroundings**

The application site is the Premier Inn Hotel at 112 -114 Portland Street Manchester. The hotel building is situated at the junction of Portland Street and Oxford Street, with a curved façade on this corner and the entrance to the hotel on Portland Street. It forms an island block bounded by St James Street, Dickinson Street, Portland Street, and Oxford Street.

The building is 4 storeys in height plus a mansard roof set back behind a parapet. The building has a large modern flat roof with rooftop plant distributed across its extent in various locations. There are also rooftop structures such as lift overruns.



The building is Grade II listed and lies within the George Street Conservation Area. The façade of the building on Portland Street is Grade II Listed whilst the remainder of the building is of modern construction. The listing description is focused entirely on the façade as follows:

> *Warehousing (probably textiles or clothing), now shop and offices. 1880, by Charles Heathcote; altered. Sandstone ashlar ground floor, red brick with sandstone dressings above, slate roof. Irregular trapeziform plan. Romanesque style. Three storeys with basement and attic, 5 bays, symmetrical above ground floor; with cornice to ground floor, brick pilasters and stone sill-bands to both upper floors, stone eaves cornice on brick corbel table, and shallow 3-bayflat-roofed attic dormer. Round-headed doorway to left , shouldered waggon entry to right, and windows and doorways with rounded corners between these; windows of 1:2:2:2:1 lights on both upper floors, those in the centre at 1st*

*floor set in round-headed arches and with round-headed lights, brick pilasters and moulded stone imposts, and those in the flanking bays with segmental open pediments; those in the centre at 2nd floor with square-headed lights, set-in square pilasters and brick corbel tables, and those in the flanking bays segmental-headed with corniced brick architraves. Unusual dormer with 3 groups of 3 small round-headed windows and stone cornice. All these windows sashed without glazing bars. Rear and interior not inspected. Small building of boldly-modelled mid-Victorian character. Forms group with No.106 and No.108 to right (q.v.) and Nos 116 (etc) to 126 to left.*

The hotel forms part of 'The Circus' development and is one of a number of occupiers. The hotel takes up a large proportion of the building above ground level. Other occupiers of the building include a Wetherspoons pub, a casino and a retail outlet. The wider area is characterised by typical city centre activities and uses including shops, restaurants and fast food outlets. It is a busy city centre location.

Planning History

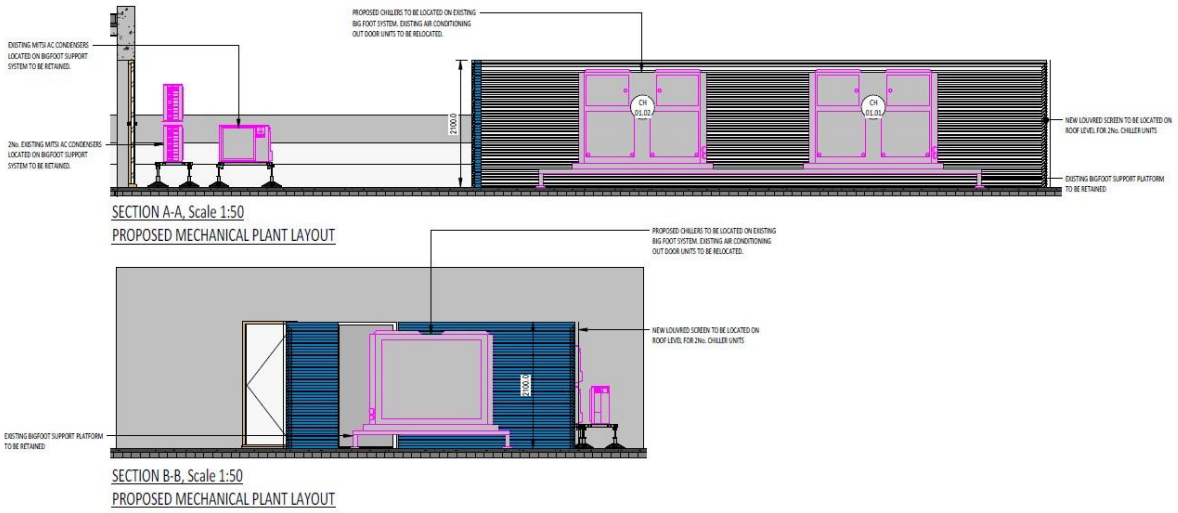
There are numerous recent applications for advertisement consent at the site for new or replacement signage. The most recent is dated 28 November 2023 (ref. 137167/AO/2023) for the *"installation of 2no. high level internally illuminated individual letter signs and 1no. externally illuminated projecting sign."*

**Proposed Development**

The existing plant is coming to the end of its operational life and the requirements of a modern hotel necessitate new replacement plant in support of its ongoing operation.

The existing dispersed rooftop plant will be removed, and new replacement plant will be consolidated in a single location where there is currently already rooftop plant in situ. A new timber louvered acoustic enclosure will surround the new plant, enclosing it on all 4 sides.

The new plant will perform better than existing in terms of energy efficiency.



Both planning permission and listed building are sought for the proposed development.

**Planning Policy**

Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act requires that determination of any planning application must be in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise

In this case the Development Plan comprises the Manchester Core Strategy 2012 (including 2024 Addendum) and extant policies from the Unitary Development Plan.

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) and associated guidance is also highly relevant to this application.

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

Paragraph 131 states that *"the creation of high-quality beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve"*. Paragraph 131 also sets out that good design is a key aspect to creating sustainable development and making better places for people to live and work in, helping to make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraphs 135 and 139 set out a series of guidelines for what constitutes good design which developments should adhere to, and states that development that is not well designed should be refused.

Paragraph 202 states that Heritage Assets *"should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations."*

Paragraph 207 states that *"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."*

Paragraph 212 states that *"when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."*

Paragraph 215 states that *"where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.*

Manchester Core Strategy

Policy CC 9 'Design and Heritage' seeks to preserve and enhance the heritage assets within the city and states that *"development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments."*

Policy EN 4 seeks to reduce CO2 emissions by enabling low and zero carbon development, emphasising the government's policy of reducing carbon emissions as a major component in mitigating climate change.

Policy DM 1 development management' sets out a series of specific issues which development should have regard to, including effects on amenity such as noise and vibration.

Extant Unitary Development Plan Policies

Policy 18 'Conservation Areas' sets out the guidance relating to conservation areas within the city.

Policy 19 'Listed Buildings' states that *"the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting".*

**Planning, Design & Heritage Statement**

The principle of rooftop plant on the hotel is long-established in both planning and heritage terms. It is currently disbursed across the modern flat roof of the entire island block in various locations.

The proposed scheme seeks to modernise the current rooftop plant strategy by consolidating new high quality equipment in a single location. The chosen location is where there is already rooftop plant in situ, which will be replaced.

The new plant will be located on the modern flat roof of the Premier Inn Hotel, situated towards the back of the roof and set back away from the front elevation as far as practically possible.

The result is that the new plant will not be visible from any street level views towards the building, and will not be visible when viewing the Grade II listed façade of the building.

There is an overall reduction in the amount, massing, and proliferation of rooftop plant across the site. The proposed development is therefore an improvement on existing both in terms of visual and heritage impact, and in terms of its performance. The proposal would be in accordance with Policy EN 4 through the upgrading of the plant to modern efficiencies.

The NPPF requires an appraisal of the Heritage Asset proportionate to its value and with the nature of the proposal. Paragraph 207 states that *"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"* (Our emphasis).

The building is Grade II listed and lies within the George Street Conservation Area. The listing description set out in Chapter 2 is entirely focused on the exterior of the building, there is no mention of the interior. Indeed, the building behind the façade is modern and this includes the flat roof and rooftop plant. The heritage significance of 110 – 114 Portland Street is therefore considered to derive from its architectural features as well as it setting with the Conservation Area.

The original form of the building remains intact and represents a good example of a nineteenth century urban commercial building. The bays, cills, cornicing and other significant architectural features noted in the listing remain intact, visible and well preserved. The preservation of these architectural and historic features contributes to the significance of this heritage asset.

The new rooftop plant is replacing existing, is situated on a modern flat roof, and is not visible when viewed from the street. No historic fabric will be affected or altered by the proposal.

There is only considered to be limited impact to the listed building, with any minor impact to be low and not harmful to the listed building, where the significance lies in its external appearance when viewed from the street or surrounding buildings.

Turning to Conservation Area impact, for similar reasons, there is considered to be limited opportunity for the proposed development to impact on the George Street Conservation Area. The proposal site sits on the edge of the Conservation Area, which is a busy commercial district of Manchester city centre. As well as being home to the City's China Town the area contains many shops, restaurants as well as some residential buildings. It is a vibrant, busy, and noisy city centre location.

The significance of this Conservation Area is derived from its architectural features as well as its historical background as a commercial district. The appraisal notes that much of the significance of the area comes from its regular grid pattern of streets established in Georgian times as well as the Georgian architecture and its associated scale.

The new plant will not affect the overall presence of the building within the wider Conservation Area, it will only have limited visibility from high level private views from nearby buildings, and the new plant is considered to represent an improvement (albeit minor) on existing by removing a large amount of distributed plant across the roof and consolidating it all in one place.

Having regards to the tests within the NPPF, Paragraph 215 states that *"where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."*

Whilst the NPPF only refers to "substantial" and "less than substantial" harm, the latter is applicable by these limited criteria. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF is therefore engaged.

It should also be emphasised how some works will result in no harm to heritage significance or could improve heritage significance.

In this instance it is not considered that there will be any harm to the significance of any designated heritage assets.

However, even if the Council were to conclude there is some "less than substantial" harm to the listed building, any harm would be at the lower end of the scale of least harm.

The heritage benefits and the public benefits presented by the scheme, however minor – consolidating the rooftop plant into a single location, and allowing the hotel to continue to serve its guests – outweighs any impact on designated heritage assets when assessing the proposals against the "substantial" or "less than substantial" tests of the NPPF.

As set out above though, in this instance there is not considered to be any harm to the host building, nearby listed buildings, or the Conservation Area. The tests within the NPPF are passed.

The proposed development is in accordance with paragraphs 131,135, and 139 of the NPPF with regards to good design, and paragraphs 202, 207, 212 and 215 of the NPPF with regards to heritage assessment and impact. Similarly, the proposals are in accordance with Policy CC 9 of the Manchester Core Strategy, and policies 18 and 19 of the Unitary Development Plan.

Amenity Impact

A Noise Impact Assessment prepared by Scotch Partners accompanies this application, which has assessed the background noise of the area and assessed the proposed plant. The report concludes:

- Noise levels are expected to be at least 5dB below typical background sound levels at the nearest noise-sensitive receivers.
- Noise emission from the proposed plant is expected to meet Manchester City Council's anticipated requirements.
- Structure-borne noise into the Premier Inn guestrooms will be controlled by installing the proposed equipment on anti-vibration mounts.

Accordingly, the proposal will be in accordance with Policy DM 1 as it would provide an acceptable level of amenity once operational. Indeed, it is considered to represent an improvement on existing by removing the various pieces of equipment distributed across the roof.

Access Statement

There are no alterations to existing access arrangements to the hotel, or how rooftop plant is accessed for maintenance.

**Conclusion**

The existing rooftop plant is coming to the end of its operational life and needs to be replaced. The existing plant which is to be removed is scattered across the roof of the building in various locations. The new plant will be consolidated in a single location, and enclosed within a new timber louvred acoustic enclosure. It will offer better performance and improved efficiencies over the existing.

The proposed works have been assessed and are not considered to harm the significance of either the listed building, adjacent listed buildings, or the George Street Conservation Area. Indeed, the proposal is considered to represent a minor heritage benefit, and an operational improvement on the existing.

For all of the above reasons it is considered that the proposed development is in accordance with the policies of the Manchester Core Strategy & UDP and the National Planning Policy Framework, and it is respectfully requested that planning permission and listed building consent is granted.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

**Tom Edmunds MRTPI**
**Consultant**

[redacted]