MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no.	144765/LO/2025
Date registered valid:	15 December 2025
Proposal:	Listed Building Consent for internal fit out to Levels 1 and 2.
Address:	Sunlight House , Quay Street, Manchester, M3 3JZ
Ward(s):	Deansgate Ward
Applicant:	Cheriton Group Melville Ltd
Agent (if any):	Mr Jay Patel Savills
Case officer:	James Bridgman Tel: 0161 219 6202 Email: james.bridgman@manchester.gov.uk
Recommendation:	Approve
Date of recommendation:	18 May 2026

Application details

Type of application: Listed Building Consent

Development type: Listed building alteration

Date of site visit: 30 January 2026

Standard consultations:
Printed: 18 December 2025 Expired: 11 January 2026

Neighbour notifications
No neighbour notifications have been printed and sent.

Site notice
Posted: 23 December 2026 Expired: 16 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

Listed building: Grade II

Conservation area: Deansgate Conservation Area 1985

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

Sunlight House is located on the corner of Quay Street and Little Quay Street in the city centre of Manchester. Sunlight House is a Grade II listed building completed in 1932 by Joseph Sunlight, architect and developer, as the headquarters for his property business, with offices and shops to let. At the time, it was Manchester's tallest building. The building is also located within the Deansgate/ Peter Street Conservation Area.

The building is a 14 storey (15 including roof plant to western side) steel and concrete structure, clad in Portland stone. The building is almost square in plan, with three street frontages, and a large central light-well. Each of the three street facades are seven bays, with the two street corners expressed as three sided towers, which each rise to a four-level octagonal turret, topped by a domed lantern and finial. Behind and between the turrets, the top four floors are expressed as a mansard roof with multiple setback square dormer windows, which together with the turrets create a distinctive skyline and a major feature in the city.

The building has undergone refurbishment of the external facades, reception area and upper floors following the approval of listed building consents.

Description of development

Listed Building Consent is sought for internal fit out to Levels 1 and 2. This works include:

- Installation of partitions to subdivide the floorspace into office spaces, meeting rooms, coworking areas, breakout spaces/tea points and reception areas.
- Installation of suspended acoustic panels
- 4no. air conditioning units located within the riser
- Installation of wall mounted fan coil units within office spaces

Consultations & Notification Responses

Publicity - The proposal has been advertised, by way of site notice and press advertisement, as affecting the setting of a listed building. No comments have been as part of that process.

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-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 CC9 – Design and Heritage
- Policy EN1 – Design Principle and Strategic Characters Areas
- Policy EN3 – Heritage

The Unitary Development Plan for Manchester – For the reasons outlined below the following saved UDP Policies are of relevance to this application:

- Policy DC18 – Conservation Areas
- Policy DC19 – Listed Buildings

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Chapter 9 – Promoting Sustainable Transport
- Chapter 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Chapter 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (LBCA Act) states that in considering whether to grant Listed Building Consent for any works the Local Planning Authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 66 of the LBCA Act requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings. This requires more than a simple balancing exercise and considerable importance and weight should be given to the desirability of preserving the setting.

Section 72 of the LBCA Act requires the local planning authority to have pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

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.

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

Relevant Planning History

136161/LO/2023 - Listed Building Consent for the refurbishment of the office areas including ground floor reception area together with elevational alterations (Approved 24 July 2023)

CDN/25/0074 - Discharge of Condition 15 (Tenant Fit Out) (Approved 1 May 2025)

140958/LO/2024 - Listed Building Consent Application for Internal Refurbishment of Levels 1 and 6 (Approved 5 December 2024) &

CDN/25/0789 - Discharge of Condition 4 (Tenant Fit Out Guide) (Approved 25 September 2025)

Issues

Impacts on the listed building

This application refers to levels 1 and 2 of Sunlight House. The listed building has recently undergone a significant refurbishment, and the applicant would occupy these floors as offices.

The north side of level 1 has restored original parquet flooring which would be retained in situ.

The number of partitions particularly to the south and southeast of the floorplan is intensified to create smaller office spaces. The level of subdivision appears to have been designed to allow for one window to each space. This would result in a moderate amount less than substantial harm to the openness of the floorplan.

All doors and walls within the corridors would be clear glazing and would be installed along the bulkheads. The product specification of the partitions is high quality with large areas of glazing and slim black frames.

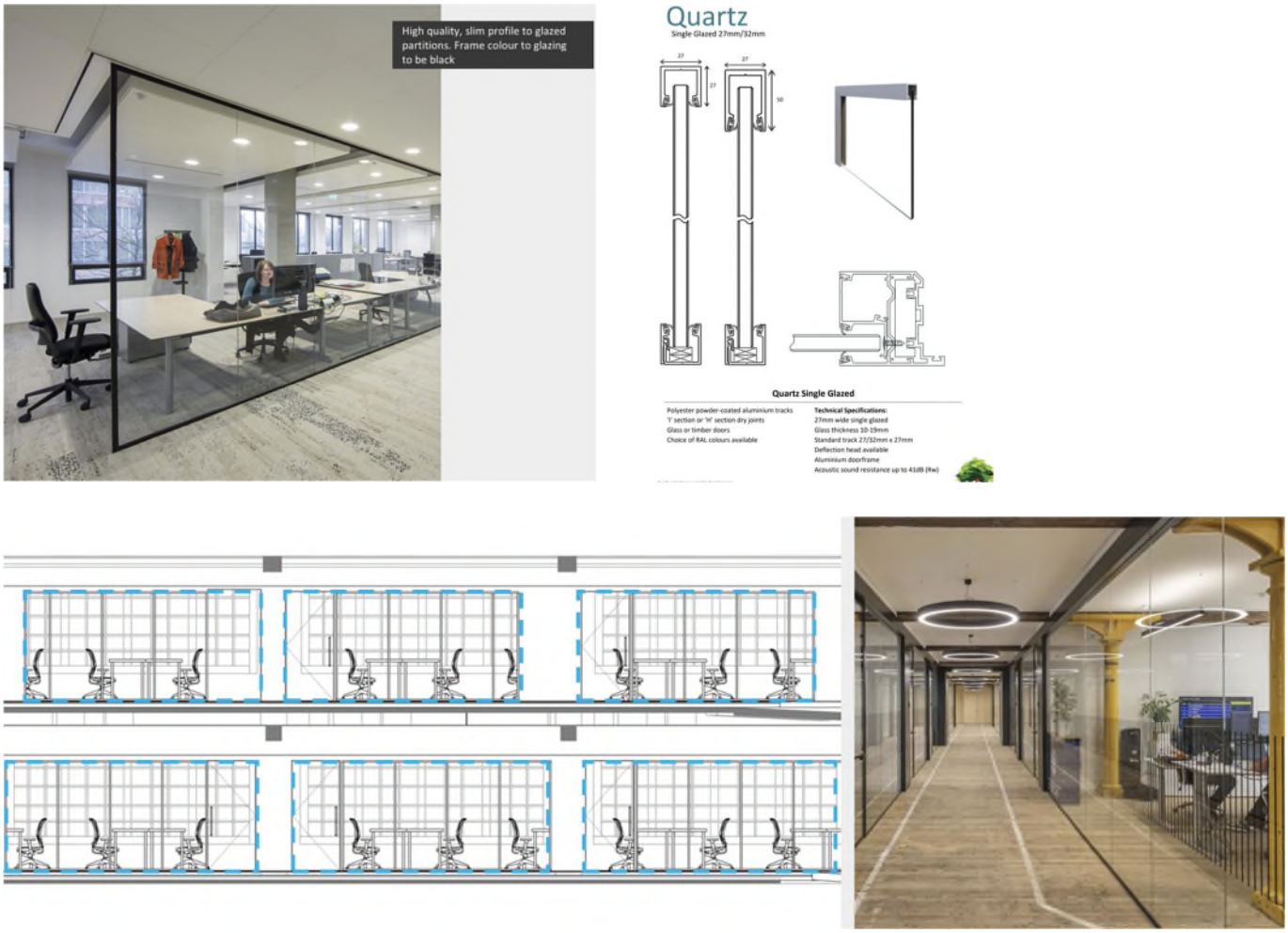


Figure 1 – Proposed location of glazing and examples of partitions

There would be breakout spaces that would retain the openness of the floor plan. The internal fit out demonstrates a high-quality finish and references the art deco style evident within the reception area and meeting rooms within the rotundas. There would be tea points installed to each floor to serve the new office spaces.

The installation of acoustic ceiling panels would result in a low level of less than substantial harm to the historic coffered ceiling. As shown below in Figure 1, to lessen the impact of these interventions, the acoustic ceiling rafts would sit above the linear lighting and coffers. There would be a mixed approach with final details of the colour to be agreed through planning permission. The LPA advise the colour of the suspended ceiling rafts preferably should be colour matched to the ceiling to ensure the rafts do not detract from the historic coffered ceiling.

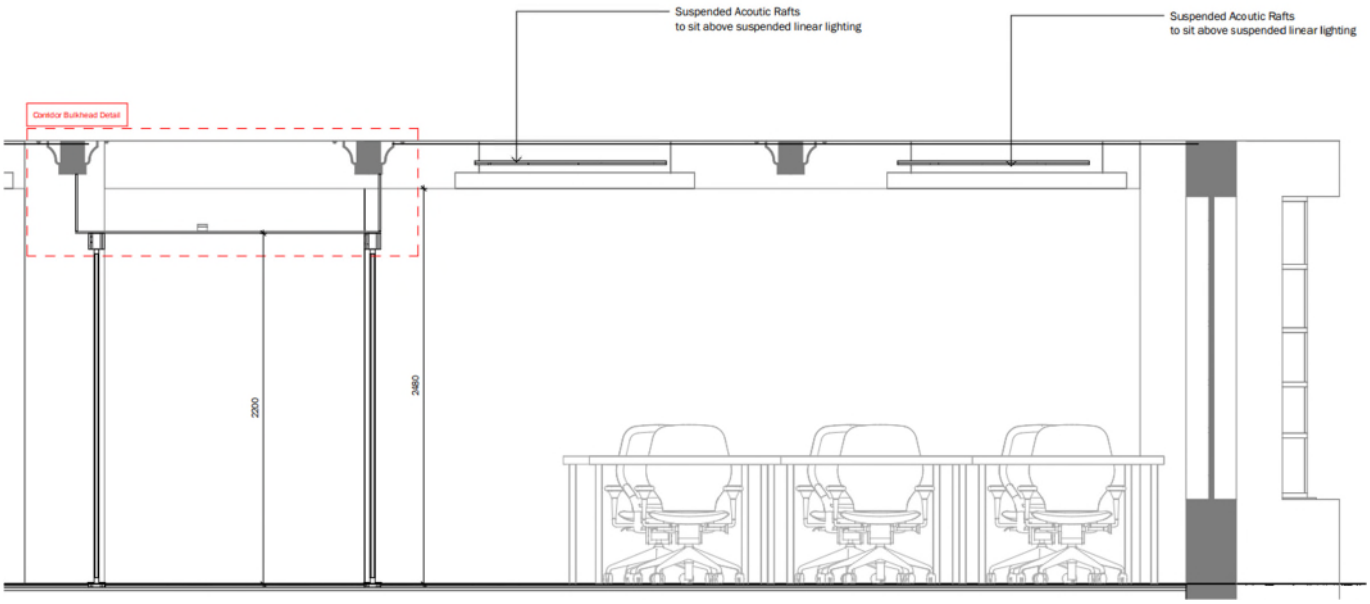


Figure 2 – Section showing partitions along bulkheads and location of suspended acoustic rafts

Mechanical ventilation would be connected existing building's established ventilation strategy which refers to the existing bulkheads across the floors. Due to the extent of the subdivision, additional ventilation would be required including the installation of 4no. air condition condensers with 2no. located on each floor. These units would be sited within the landlord's external riser on each floor, and any associated equipment will utilise plant areas.

Any additional plant that cannot be served by the central bulkhead will include the installation of wall-mounted fan coil units leading from the new air conditioning units within the external riser. These are shown on the mechanical drawings submitted in support of the application and would be slimline and white to match the colour of the walls.

Where existing Raised Access Flooring (RAF) exists, it would conceal power and data cabling to avoid any direct fixings into historic fabric and minimises the visual impact.

In areas to level one where parquet flooring exists, cabling would be routed through painted steel surface conduits from ceiling to low level or where possible conduits will be concealed within partition walls.

The lighting design would be minimal as the linear lighting would follow the same design principles across the refurbishment of the listed building.

Background on occupier

In support of this application, a detailed business case for the level of subdivision has been submitted. BLOCK Workspace operate as a serviced office model focused on small-to-medium sized private office suites, supplemented by shared coworking, meeting and breakout spaces.

The supporting information identifies that current market demands in Manchester strongly favours flexible working spaces. The occupier operations outside of traditional leases to allow greater flexibility to business using their spaces. Statistics demonstrate that flexible office spaces demand for smaller suites has risen from 13% in 2023 to 35% in 2025.

The partitions would be high quality, and the level of glazing has been maximised to allow views into the spaces, and the size of the corridors are wider than average to minimise any impacts.

Heritage Assessment

The level of subdivision of the floorplans is driven by the business model of the occupier and providing high quality office accommodation for smaller businesses on flexible tenures. These smaller spaces typically refer to the southern side of the floor plans as spaces with retained parquet flooring would remain as existing. The subdivision has resulted in a moderate amount of less than substantial harm to the openness and permeability of the floor plan.

The suspended acoustic panels would result in a low level of less than substantial harm as they would detract from the historic coffered ceiling.

In line with the requirements of paragraph 215 of the NPPF where less than substantial harm occurs this must be set against the public benefits of the scheme.

The applicant has presented a unique business case that demonstrates there is a requirement for flexible office space within the city centre of Manchester. The arrangement of the flexible tenures would support small and medium businesses providing accessibility to high quality office environment. The interventions and partitions would be high quality with large areas of glazing which would minimise any impacts.

On balance, whilst harm has been identified through the level of subdivision and acoustic attenuation panels to the historic ceiling, it is considered to be outweighed by above identified public benefits derived from providing high quality office accommodation to a required market and supporting small and medium businesses within the city centre.

The proposal complies with policies SP1, CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy, saved UDP policies DC18 and DC19, Places for Everyone Plan policy JP-P2, and guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning (Listed Buildings 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 in determining this application by assessing the proposal against relevant planning policies and all material considerations, identifying matters of concern with the proposal and discussing those with the applicant/agent.

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:

   - Mechanical Services Proposal Level 1: EMS-83034-M-101 Rev P01
   - Mechanical Services Proposal Level 2: EMS-83034-M-102 Rev P01
   - Product Data Sheet, prepared by Daikin
   - Project Report VRV Selection prepared by Daikin: 1886073/2360738

   All received by the Local Planning Authority on 2 April 2026

   - Design and Access Statement: BLCOK Rev D

   Received by the Local Planning Authority on 20 March 2026

   - General Arrangement Level 1: 10-101 Rev P05
   - General Arrangement Level 2: 10-102 Rev P04
   - Partitions & Doors Layout Level 1: 20-101 Rev P01
   - Partitions & Doors Layout Level 2: 20-102 Rev P01
   - Partition Details Multiple Floors: 20-401 Rev P00
   - Teapoint Allocation Level 1: 41-101 Rev P01
   - Teapoint Allocation Level 2: 41-102 Rev P01
   - Joinery Allocation Level 1: 42-101 Rev P02
   - Joinery Allocation Level 2: 42-102 Rev P02
   - Reflected Ceiling Layout Level 1: 50-101 Rev P03
   - Reflected Ceiling Layout Level 2: 50-102 Rev P03
   - Proposed Ceiling Details: 50-401 Rev P02

   All received by the Local Planning Authority on 30 January 2026

   - Floor Finishes Layout Level 1: 31-101 Rev P01
   - Floor Finishes Layout Level 2: 31-102 Rev P01

   All received by the Local Planning Authority on 15 December 2025

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. Pursuant to policies CC9, EN1, EN3, SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy, saved policy DC19.1 and Sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

3) Prior to the installation of the acoustic ceiling panels hereby approved, final details of the finish including the colour of each panel shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

   The approved acoustic panels shall then be installed in accordance drawing No. 50-401 (Ceiling Section) and the approved colours agreed under this condition.

   Reason - The proposed works affect a building which is included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest so careful attention to building work is required to protect the character and appearance of this building in accordance with saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

4) The partitions hereby approved shall be installed in accordance with Partitions Details Multiple Floors ref 20-401, Level 1 Partitions Layout ref 20-101 P01 and Level 2 Partitions Layout ref 20-102. The glazed partitions have a frame depth of 27/32mm and installed in accordance with the details within the Design and Access Statement Rev D.

   The glazed partitions shall be clear glazed at all times and views into the offices shall not be screened or obscured in any way, with the exception of that required for building control regulations.

   Reason: The proposed works affect a building which is included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest so careful attention to building work is required to protect the character and appearance of this building in accordance with saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

5) Prior to occupation of Level 1 and 2 within the development hereby approved, the installation of the new MEP services shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents:

   - Mechanical Services Proposal Level 1: EMS-83034-M-101 Rev P01
   - Mechanical Services Proposal Level 2: EMS-83034-M-102 Rev P01
   - Product Data Sheet, prepared by Daikin
   - Project Report VRV Selection prepared by Daikin: 1886073/2360738

   All received by the Local Planning Authority on 2 April 2026

   - Design and Access Statement: BLOCK Rev D

   Received by the Local Planning Authority on 20 March 2026

   Reason - In the interests of preserving and protecting the historic character and appearance of the listed building in accordance with policies CC9 and EN3 of the Core Strategy (2012), saved policy DC19 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995) and the NPPF/NPPG.

6) Notwithstanding drawing 50-101 P03 and 102 P03 (Received 30 January 2026), prior to the commencement of any decoration works, final details of all paint finishes to ceilings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

   The approved details shall then be implemented as part of the development.

   Reason - The proposed works affect a building which is included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest so careful attention to building work is required to protect the character and appearance of this building in accordance with saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and policies SP1, EN3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Heritage & Urban Design

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