MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Delegated Officer Report

Summary of application details

Application reference:	PLA-2026-000392
Application type:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
Proposal:	Listed Building Consent for repair works to cornice, beams and ceiling.
Site address:	Atlas Chambers Ship Canal House 4th Floor 96-98 King Street Manchester M2 4WU
Ward(s):	Deansgate
Date application valid:	18 May 2026
Applicant name:	Grosvenor OEI Ltd
Agent (if any):	Mr Stephen Levrant
Case officer:	Sam Elliott
Recommendation:	Approve
Date of recommendation:	06/07/2026

Description of site, building and/or area

The application concerns the fourth floor of the Grade II-listed Ship Canal House, which sits on the corner of King Street and Brook Street. Ship Canal House is made up of three separate listed buildings, Ship Canal House itself, the neighbouring Atlas Chambers and Lombard Chambers to the rear. The fourth-floor forms part of the original layout and construction of Ship Canal House and Atlas Chambers and have been joined internally at fourth floor level since construction.

Elements of high heritage significance include the original encased steel columns and structural ceiling beams.

Elements of little heritage significance include the late 20th century rear extension; and all interventions completed as part of previously consented refurbishment works, including modern partitioned toilets suites; decorative schemes; modern flush doors; modern radiators; skirting trunking; all lighting and M&E.

The area relates to King Street in Manchester City Centre. The area lies within the Upper King Street Conservation Area (1970) and there are fourteen listed buildings on the street including the Grade I-listed former Bank of England building at number 82 and the Grade II*-listed former Midland Bank at number 100. The character of the area comprises office, retail, dining and drinking uses. It is in a highly sustainable location, nearby to many public transport routes.

Relevant planning history

144512/LO/2025: Listed Building Consent for internal alterations to fourth floor offices, and internal refurbishment of fourth floor lift lobby and WCs. Approved 20/01/2026.

Upon commencement of the works, and the removal of the suspended ceiling tiles, areas or original stepped plaster cornicing as well as additional steel beams coated in vermiculite were discovered within the Atlas Chambers section of the fourth floor.

Description of development

Listed Building Consent is sought for alterations to the ceiling plan to account for the cornicing and additional beams discovered.



The proposed works include boxing out the discovered steel beams. Matching cornicing would be installed to line out the beams, with plasterboard linings to the ceiling soffits.

Areas of exposed and damaged cornicing would also be repaired.

The works include a localised chamfered boxing out of Beam Y to account for the phalange and to achieve the relevant fire rating for the floor, with a re-concealment of the cornice on its south side. Original cornicing would be left in-situ behind the proposed boxing out.





Some cornicing within the meeting rooms would be reconcealed by underdrawing the ceiling.

Consultation, notification and publicity responses

Consultations

No consultations.

Notifications and publicity

Notification:
Occupiers of neighbouring buildings were notified of the proposal via notification letters. No representations have been received.

Publicity:
The application was advertised by site notice and in the local press as affecting a listed building. No representations have been received as a result of this publicity.

Relevant policies

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
- 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
- Sections 16

Assessment

Impact on Heritage Asset

The proposed ceiling works respond to the actual conditions at the 4th floor of the Listed Building's ceiling, including uncovered original historic fabric and more structural beams than anticipated during the investigative works for application 144512/LO/2025.

In so doing, the works would expose and celebrate significant historic cornicing fabric and have a positive heritage impact as such. The proposed boxing out of beams would be consistent with the overall treatment of the ceiling across the floorplate, and moreover work towards achieving an acceptable fire rating.

It is considered that the significant heritage benefits achieved by approved application 144512/LO/2025, namely the removal of the suspended ceiling and allowance for a greater appreciation of the space, would be preserved through these works. The re-introduction of lowered ceilings within the meeting rooms would reduce the full heritage benefits somewhat, though it is noted that this is no greater than was present prior to the current strip out.

It is viewed that reduction in these benefits is offset by the benefits of revealing and repairing the original damaged ceiling.

The applicant has submitted the 'Cornice Restoration Methodology' document prepared by TMT and provided photographic evidence of samples viewed on site 21/05/2026. A compliance condition is recommended in the event of an approval to ensure the repairs and replacement cornicing are achieved to a satisfactory degree.

Assessment of Harm

The proposal responds to the condition of the actual ceiling, working to expose and celebrate original historic fabric. Additional discovered beams are to be boxed out, masking damage and helping achieve a suitable fire rating for the longevity of the listed building. While the full heritage benefits of a fully exposed ceiling secured in application 144512/LO/2025 would not be achieved now with the lower ceilings to the meeting rooms, in these areas this would be no worse than the ceiling heights prior to that application. It is considered that the benefits of a more exposed ceiling are preserved, and the overall heritage impact is therefore considered to be neutral to positive beneficial.

As such, it is not considered necessary to consider the public benefits of the proposal as per the requirements of Paragraph 215 of the NPPF. On this 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.

In order to reduce the impact of the works, conditions have been recommended to ensure compliance with the submitted repair and replacement methodology documents, as well as with the samples.

Conclusion

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. On this 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.

The proposal would also meet the requirements set out in Places for Everyone Policies JP Strat2, JP-P1, and JP-P2; Policies SP1, CC1, CC9, EN1, EN3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy; saved UDP policy DC19; and sections 12 and 16 of the NPPF as they relate to the sustaining, preservation and enhancement of heritage assets.

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**

Conditions attached to this decision

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:

   Drawings

   - 1427-04-HE-01 Revision B

   - 1427-04-HE-03 Revision A
   - 1427-04-HE-04 Revision C
   - 1427-04-HE-05 Revision C
   - 1427-04-HE-06 Revision C
   - 1427-04-HE-07 Revision B
   - 1427-04-HE-08 Revision B
   - 1427-04-HE-09 Revision B

   All received 18/05/2026

   Documents

   - 4th Floor Site Condition – Existing Beams and Soffits prepared by bluesky

   All received 18/05/2026

   - The 'Cornice Restoration Methodology' document prepared by TMT
   - Photographic evidence of samples viewed on the 19/05/2026 site visit x6

   All received 21/05/2026

   - Heritage Statement – 4th Floor, Ship Canal House, King Street, Manchester M2 4WU dated 12 November 2025
   - Addendum Note to Heritage Statement (November 2025), 4th Floor Ship Canal House – Atlas Chambers dated 18/05/2026

   All received 05/06/2026

   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

3) The ceiling repair work and finishes hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with details of the approved samples viewed on site 19/05/2026, as well as the methods outlined in the 'Cornice Restoration Methodology' document prepared by TMT and the

provided photographic evidence of samples viewed on site, all received by Manchester City Council as the Local Planning Authority on 21/05/2026. The methodologies shall remain in situ for the duration of the construction of the development, and the approved ceiling repairs shall remain in situ thereafter.

Reason - In the interests of visual amenity and because the proposed works affect a building which is included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest and careful attention to building work is required to protect the character and appearance of this building and to ensure consistency in accordance with policy and EN3 of the Core Strategy and saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.