MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Delegated Officer Report

Summary of application details

Application reference:	PLA-2026-000569
Application type:	Full planning permission
Proposal:	Recladding and replacement of roofs at blocks 2 and 6.
Site address:	Victoria Point 44 Hathersage Road Manchester M13 0FT
Ward(s):	Ardwick
Date application valid:	03 June 2026
Applicant name:	Empiric Student Property PLC
Agent (if any):	Melissa Lee
Case officer:	Holly Wright
Recommendation:	Approve
Date of recommendation:	21 June 2026

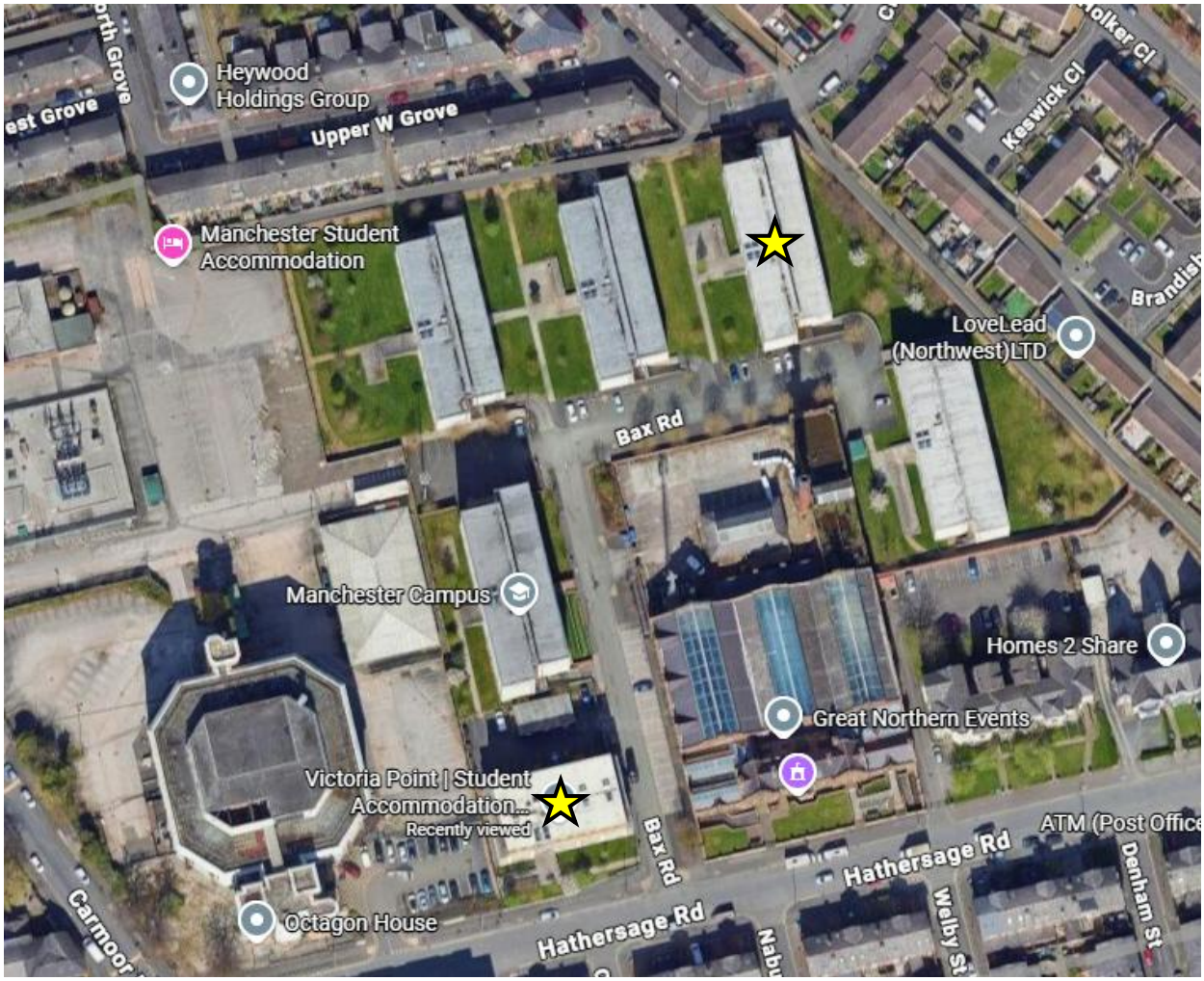
Description of site, building and/or area

The site relates to two of 6no. 4-5 storey student accommodation buildings (2009) arranged on a U-shaped campus adjacent to the Grade II* listed Victoria Baths (1906). Block 2 is at the rear off Bax Road whilst Block 6 overlooks Hathersage Road adjacent to the Baths on the corner of the Victoria Point site.

The development has an extant permission granted in 2025 for phased demolition and extension up to 12 storeys that is not being progressed and has an approved Masterplan.

The Baths is highly significant and within the top 8.5% of listed buildings in the UK. Its significance mainly derives from the quality of design and materials including distinctive red brick and stone banding across its principal and side elevations and an eclectic blend of Jacobean and Baroque elements.

Both of the blocks comprise of white facing brick with large areas of HPL cladding that have a robust appearance and suffer from workmanship defects to the brickwork and high-pressure laminate cladding as well as being non-compliant with current fire regulations.


Heywood
Holdings Group
Upper W Grove
Manchester Student
Accommodation
Keswick Cl
LoveLead
(Northwest) LTD
Bax Rd
Manchester Campus
Homes 2 Share
Great Northern Events
Victoria Point | Student
Accommodation...
Recently viewed
Hathersage Rd
ATM (Post Office
Denham St
Octagon House
Hathersage Rd






4CM
0151 317 9333
Danger
Keep out



Description of development

The applicant is seeking planning permission for the recladding and replacement of roofs at blocks 2 and 6 of Victoria Point.

Relevant planning history

Planning Application - 077297/OO/2005/N2 - OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION (siting and means of access) erection of six buildings (3/4/5/6 storeys). Comprising 194 residential units. Provision of 221 car parking spaces at ground and sub- basement level. Associated landscaping. Amendments to existing access from Hathersage Road – Approved (2006).

Planning Application - 082442/MO/2007/N2 - RESERVED MATTERS APPLICATION for the scale, appearance and landscaping in relation to the erection of 6 no. four, five and six storey blocks to create 194 new residential units with basement car parking and landscaping (approved in outline under application 077297/00/2005/N2 – Approved (2007).

Planning Application - 114962/FO/2017 - Proposed elevational alterations including the re-cladding of all existing buildings, the internal reconfiguration of Block 5 to change the accommodation from 47 no. flats to create 124 no. studios and 2 bedroom flats, internal alterations to the ground and basement levels of Blocks 3 and 4 including a new underground link between the buildings together with the erection of an entrance lobby between Blocks 3 and 4 at ground level to provide communal student amenity space and improvements to the public realm and existing open space around the blocks including repaving and new landscaping, all in association with the use of the existing buildings as student accommodation – Approved (2017).

Planning Application - 118490/JO/2017 - Variation of Condition No. 2 of planning approval 114962/FO/2017 to allow a reduction in floorspace of new basement area between Blocks 3 and 4, reconfiguration of accommodation within existing basement areas and associated elevational and landscape alterations – Approved (2018).

Planning Application - 139987/FO/2024 - Redevelopment of existing student accommodation buildings (6 in total) to include the phased demolition and extension of the existing buildings to a maximum height of 12 storey's to form Purpose Built Student Accommodation (876 bedspaces in total) (Use Class Sui Generis), including associated ancillary internal and external amenity space, ground floor community/commercial (Use Class E, F1 and F2), hard and soft landscaping and associated highway works – Approved (2025).

Planning Application - 144634/NMC/2025 - Non-material amendment application to planning permission reference 139987/FO/2024 to allow: update to phasing plan; reprofiling of ground within proximity of Blocks 2 and 3 and associated reconfiguration to basements including to Block 4; internal layout changes to accommodate redesign of building cores and fire escape routes and reduction in floor area to commercial unit within Block 6 and reduction in 2 no. PBSA units; minor elevational changes to window openings and door positions – Refused (2026).

Planning Application - 145115/NMC/2026 - Non-material amendment to Planning Permission 139987/FO/2024 to allow update of phasing plan, reprofiling of ground near blocks 2 and 3, reconfiguration of basement level to blocks 2, 3 and 4, reduction of floorspace to block 6 commercial unit, loss of 2no. PSBA units and minor elevational changes – Approved (2026).

Consultation, notification and publicity responses

Consultations

Environmental Health requested a condition relating to the control of demolition and construction hours be attached in the event of an approval. Clarification, in the form of a statement from the applicant, was also requested as to whether the replacement cladding would affect the noise levels inside the residential properties.

Historic England did not offer any advice in relation to the application.

Flood Risk Management requested informative notes relating to property flood resilience measures and culverts be attached to the decision notice. As a United Utilities public sewer was identified as being present on site, **Flood Risk Management** recommended the LPA consult UU on an approvable master plan before determining the planning application. *This is not considered to be necessary in this instance given that the proposal relates to recladding and replacement roofs only.*

Notifications and publicity

Local residents – no responses received.

Negotiations

Concerns were raised regarding the impact of the proposal upon the noise levels inside the residential properties. In response, the agent advised that the reclad proposals have been developed in line with the consented scheme as far as possible and will include significant upgrades in thermal insulation and materiality relative to the existing condition, which in turn should improve acoustic performance of the building envelope.

Concerns were raised regarding the introduction of fibre cement rainscreen cladding in vertically-aligned panels surrounding the windows to Block 2 and forming the façade of the upper two stores of Block 6 in relation to its appearance, visibility of rivets, weathering and staining, which could collectively degrade the quality of the façade and wider street scene. In response, the agent advised that the proposed fibre cement board offers a significant material upgrade to the current building, and due to structural limitations, this lightweight material of a complementary and durable character has been selected. The agent also advised that the proposed fibre cement panels would be affixed to the building using secret fixings to the equitone panel.

Clarification was sought regarding the bay study for Block 6 and the brise-soleil across both blocks as the south elevation of Block 6 facing Hathersage Road shows articulation around windows in the upper two stories formed by the cement fibre cladding, but the drawing shows the surface lying flush to the window (drawing: 0814-BPA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-4026 P 01). In response, the agent indicated that the paragraph that mentions brise soleil is describing the previously consented scheme and not the proposed scheme in the current application.

Relevant policies

The following policies are considered relevant in the consideration of this application.

Unitary Development Plan (UDP) – The UDP has been superseded by the Core Strategy Development Plan, but certain policies are still considered of relevance:
- Policy DC19 – Listed Buildings
- Policy DC26 – Development and Noise

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 DM1 – Development Management
- Policy EN3 – Heritage

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024)
- Chapter 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Chapter 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Chapter 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Places for Everyone - is a long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth. It has been published by the GMCA on behalf of the nine districts and took effect and became part of the statutory development plan on March 21, 2024.
- Policy JP-P1 – Sustainable Places
- Policy JP-P2 – Heritage

Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2025)
The Government has published a consultation draft of the NPPF, intended to improve housebuilding rates through a clearer, more predictable and faster policy basis for decision and plan making. While this draft is not yet adopted, it is a material consideration.
- Chapter 14 – Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Policy DP3: Key principles for well-designed places
- Chapter 20 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment
- Policy HE4: Securing the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets
- Policy HE5: Assessing effects on heritage assets
- Policy HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets

Assessment



Submitted site plan

Principle – the principle of the proposal, to reclad and replace the roofs of Blocks 2 and 6 of Victoria Point to improve their fire safety, is acceptable. Notwithstanding this, consideration must be given to the proposal's siting, scale, and massing, appearance and impact upon visual and residential amenity, and nearby listed assets.

Scope of works – the proposal seeks to re-clad Blocks 2 and 6 at Victoria Point following external wall surveys which identified that the existing façade systems do not meet the requirements of PAS 9980 and present fire safety concerns. The existing façades comprise a combination of brickwork, high-pressure laminate (HPL) cladding and PIR/PUR insulation materials.

The proposed works involve the removal and replacement of the existing external wall systems with a new façade that complies with current fire safety standards, thereby addressing the identified risks and improving the overall performance of the buildings. Existing windows would be retained and refurbished where necessary to integrate with the new cladding system. The proposal also includes a new thermally improved roof and a modest increase in parapet height.

The proposed material palette has been informed by the wider approved development at Victoria Point (139987/FO/2024) and the site's proximity to Victoria Baths. The new façades would incorporate subtle detailing and red multi-brick banding, resulting in an improved appearance whilst delivering the required fire safety enhancements.

Siting, scale, and massing – no extensions are proposed as part of the development. For these reasons, the overall siting, scale and massing of the buildings would be largely unaffected

by the works. The only notable alteration would be a modest increase in the height of the parapets, which is not considered to materially affect the buildings' overall form or appearance.

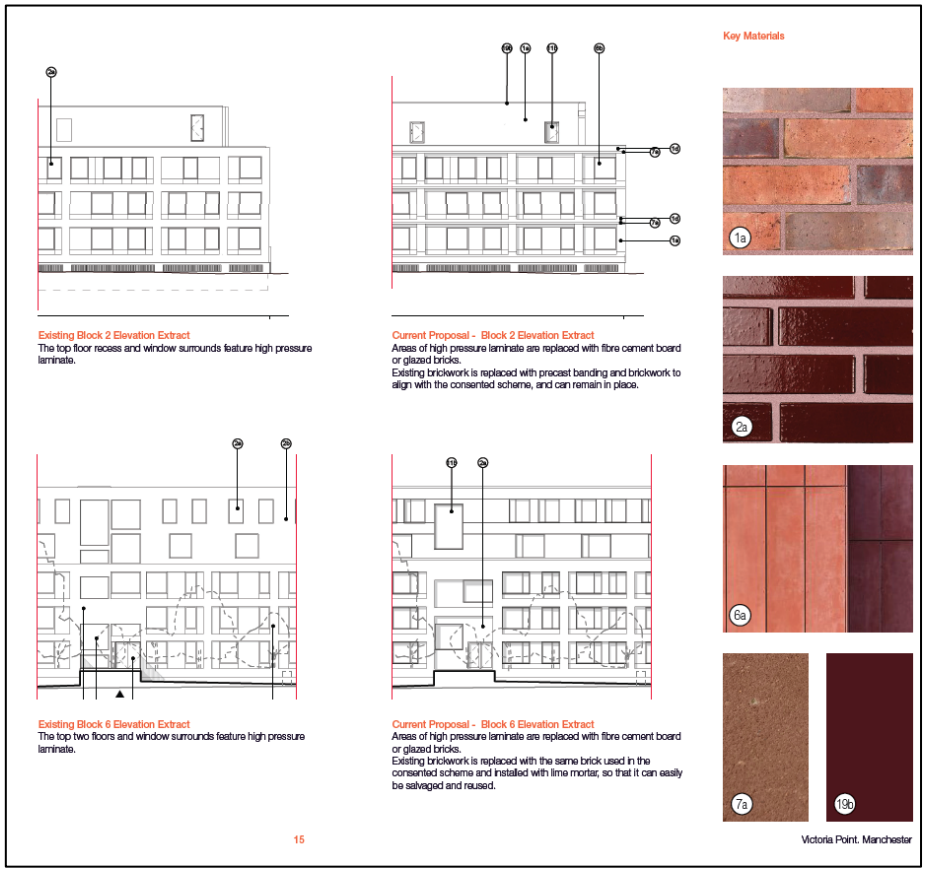
Appearance and visual amenity – the proposed recladding works have been designed to minimise disruption to existing occupiers whilst delivering an enhanced and more sustainable external appearance. Existing windows within both blocks will be retained where possible, reducing the extent of works required and limiting construction impacts.

The proposed material palette follows that approved under the wider Victoria Point consented scheme (139987/FO/2024), ensuring visual consistency across the site and contributing positively to the setting of the nearby Victoria Baths. Existing brickwork will be replaced with red multi-brick (matching that approved under 139987/FO/2024) and will be laid in lime mortar to facilitate future removal and reuse. Where a lightweight alternative is required as an interim measure, a through-coloured fibre cement board system mounted on aluminium rails is proposed. Both the rails and panels are capable of being reused or recycled, supporting the development's sustainability objectives.

In Block 2, which is intended to be partially retained, the scheme seeks to incorporate as much of the approved façade treatment as possible at this stage in order to minimise future demolition, construction waste and disturbance. For Block 6, which is intended to be fully demolished as part of the longer-term masterplan, materials will be specified using demountable and reusable systems to enable their responsible removal and incorporation within future phases of development.

The upper two storeys of Block 6 are currently constructed with a lightweight façade that is unable to support traditional brickwork. Accordingly, these levels will be clad in through-coloured fibre cement panels incorporating subtle horizontal banding that reflects the articulated stone banding found on the adjacent Victoria Baths.

The overall material approach draws on the industrial and institutional architectural character of Manchester and reflects the design principles established through the consented Victoria Point masterplan. Subtle brick detailing, including horizontal banding and soldier courses, is proposed to provide visual interest and reference local heritage precedents. The resulting appearance would represent an improvement to the existing buildings, creating a cohesive relationship with both surrounding development and the historic setting of the Victoria Baths, whilst supporting the long-term delivery of the approved masterplan.



Excerpt from submitted 'Design & Access Statement – Materials Overview'



Excerpt from submitted 'Design & Access Statement – Material Precedents'

Impact upon nearby listed assets – the proposal relates to the retrofit and recladding of the existing buildings and does not significantly alter the established height, scale or massing of either block. As such, the development would not affect the contribution that the existing built form makes to the setting of heritage assets within the surrounding area, including the Grade II* listed Victoria Baths.

The scheme would deliver a significant enhancement to the external appearance of the buildings through the replacement of the existing façade materials with a brick-led design based on the approved Victoria Point masterplan (139987/FO/2024). Red facing brick, glazed brick detailing and subtle horizontal banding have been incorporated to reflect the materials, craftsmanship and architectural language of Manchester's historic institutional buildings, including the adjacent Victoria Baths. These measures establish a visual relationship with the listed building whilst maintaining its clear architectural dominance and landmark status within the streetscape.

The proposed recladding would simplify and rationalise the existing elevations, reducing visual clutter and creating a more cohesive and restrained appearance along Hathersage Road and Bax Road. The removal of high-level signage and rationalisation of façade elements further contributes to a higher quality townscape setting for the heritage asset.

Lightweight fibre cement cladding is proposed where structural constraints prevent the use of masonry, most notably to the upper storeys of Block 6 and areas surrounding windows within Block 2. Whilst this introduces a material not previously approved as part of the masterplan, it has been selected to address fire safety requirements and will be detailed to provide a high-quality and durable appearance. Careful treatment of panel joints and detailing will ensure that the material integrates appropriately with the wider façade composition and does not detract from the setting of the listed building.

The proposal would not reveal new views of Victoria Baths; however, it would enhance existing views in which the buildings and the heritage asset are experienced together, including from Hathersage Road, Bax Road and the edge of the Victoria Park Conservation Area. The introduction of a high-quality red brick material palette would better reflect the prevailing historic townscape character and strengthen the relationship between the development and its heritage context.

Overall, the replacement of the existing façade with a more coherent, durable and contextual design would preserve and enhance the setting of Victoria Baths and other nearby heritage assets. The proposal would result in no harm to their significance and would accord with both local and national heritage policies that seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.

The proposal complies with the statutory duty set out in Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which requires special regard to be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings. By enhancing the external appearance of the existing buildings whilst retaining their established scale and form, the development would preserve and enhance the setting of the Grade II* listed Victoria Baths and other nearby heritage assets.

The proposal is also consistent with the heritage and design objectives of chapters 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Manchester Core Strategy policies EN3, DM1 and SP1, and Places for Everyone policies JP-P1 and JP-P2. The development would deliver a high-quality and sustainable design response that respects local character, reinforces the historic townscape context, and preserves the significance of nearby designated heritage assets

Residential amenity – as no extensions are proposed, the development would not alter the existing relationship between the buildings and neighbouring properties. For these reasons, no additional impacts in terms of overshadowing, loss of light, loss of outlook, privacy, or overbearing effects are anticipated. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in respect of residential amenity.

Noise – concerns were raised regarding the impact of the proposal upon the noise levels inside the residential properties. In response, the agent advised that the reclad proposals have been developed in line with the consented scheme as far as possible and will include significant upgrades in thermal insulation and materiality relative to the existing condition, which in turn should improve acoustic performance of the building envelope.

Waste storage and management – the proposal relates solely to recladding and refurbishment works and would have no significant implications for waste generation or collection arrangements.

Parking and highways impact – the proposal would not alter the use, occupancy levels or parking provision associated with the site. Accordingly, no impact on parking demand, parking provision or highway conditions is anticipated.

Flood risk - Flood Risk Management requested informative notes relating to property flood resilience measures and culverts be attached to the decision notice. As a United Utilities public sewer was identified as being present on site, Flood Risk Management recommended the LPA consult UU on an approvable master plan before determining the planning application. This is not considered to be necessary in this instance given that the proposal relates to recladding and replacement roofs only.

Conclusion – given the above issues, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of its principle, impact upon the visual and residential amenity of the area, designated assets and their setting, amongst other issues, as it broadly complies with saved policies DC19 and DC26 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester policies DM1 , SP1 and EN3 of the Manchester Core Strategy, chapters 9, 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of Places for Everyone.

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 in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the planning application. Issues have arisen during the consideration of this application and the officer negotiated with the agent to reach a satisfactory resolution.

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to Refuse

1) 3-year time limit:

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) Specified plans:

The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents:

Covering letter titled 'FULL PLANNING APPLICATION RELATING TO THE INTERIM RE-CLADDING AND REPLACEMENT OF ROOFS AT BLOCKS 2 AND 6 AT VICTORIA POINT, 44

HATHERSAGE ROAD, MANCHESTER', received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 3 June 2026.
'Victoria Point Manchester – Block 2 and 6 Reclad – Design & Access Statement P02', received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 3 June 2026.

'Block 2 and 6 Reclad – Proposed Block 2 Bay Study', numbered '0814-BPA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-4024 P01', received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 3 June 2026.
'Block 2 and 6 Reclad – Proposed Block 2 Elevations', numbered '0814-BPA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-1261 P01', received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 3 June 2026.
'Block 2 and 6 Reclad – Proposed Block 2 Visualisation', numbered '0814-BPA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-4360 P01', received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 3 June 2026.
'Block 2 and 6 Reclad – Proposed Block 6 Bay Study', numbered '0814-BPA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-4026 P01', received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 3 June 2026.
'Block 2 and 6 Reclad – Proposed Block 6 Elevations', numbered '0814-BPA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-1265 P01', received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 3 June 2026.
'Block 2 and 6 Reclad – Proposed Block 6 Visualisation', numbered '0814-BPA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-4361 P01', received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 3 June 2026.

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

3) Materials:

Notwithstanding the details included within the plans and documents listed under condition no.2 of this approval, no above-ground construction works shall take place until samples and/or specifications of all materials to be used on the external elevations of the development hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority.

The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details/samples.

Reason - To ensure there is no resulting harm to the setting of the nearby Listed Building, pursuant to saved policy DC19 of the Unitary Development Plan, policies DM1 and EN3 of the Manchester Core Strategy, policy JP-P2 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document, and chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

4) Additional details:

Notwithstanding the details included within the plans and documents listed under condition no.2 of this approval, no above-ground construction works shall take place until details of the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority:

a) Details of the jointing pattern and fixing of any cladding material,
b) Details of window reveals and soffits,
c) Details of how any cladding material will be treated to mitigate staining and weathering together with a management and maintenance scheme.

The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason - To ensure there is no resulting harm to the setting of the nearby Listed Building, pursuant to saved policy DC19 of the Unitary Development Plan, policies DM1 and EN3 of the Manchester Core Strategy, policy JP-P2 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document, and chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Informatives

1) The applicant is advised to incorporate Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures to a minimum of 150mm above the surface water flood level or a minimum of 600mm above the fluvial flood level.

2) MCC records highlight that the underground Malkin Brook Sewer / Rush Brook is located within close proximity to the site (approximately 66 m to the South of the site), while our records are frequently updated to ensure the highest level of accuracy, the records cannot guarantee 100% accuracy for all culverted assets. Therefore, we would request that the applicant informs the onsite contractor to remain observant and to take the appropriate safety precautions during excavation works. If any major unknown drainage assets are found beneath the site, then further investigation works should take place to identify the asset and MCC Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) should be contacted immediately. Any alterations to an ordinary watercourse will require consent from MCC LLFA under Land Drainage Act 1991. The developer can apply for land drainage consent (if required) via the following link: https://manchester.portal.uk.empro.verintcloudservices.com/site/myaccount/request/pr_watercourse_land.