MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Delegated Officer Report

Summary of application details

Application reference:	145409/FO/2026
Application type:	Full planning permission
Proposal:	Change of Use from Class F1 (Education) to Class E (Office) with installation of 4no louvres to Rochdale Canal elevation.
Site address:	Lower Ground Floor and Ground Floor Broadhurst House 56 Oxford Street Manchester M1 6EU
Ward(s):	Deansgate
Date application valid:	12 June 2026
Applicant name:	Claire Howard
Agent (if any):	Mr Stephen Last
Case officer:	Michael Pearson
Recommendation:	Approve
Date of recommendation:	28/07/2026

Description of site, building and/or area

The application relates to the modernist eight storey, with basement, extension to the Grade II* listed Churchgate House, also known as the Tootal Buildings and Broadhurst House, as well as the basement of the neighbouring Grade II Lee House. The application property is a former Victorian warehouse completed with a brilliantly ornate Baroque styled façade with red brick. The property is in use as offices (Class E) and features a number of original features of high significance, including a memorial to those that died during the Great War 1914-1918. The mid-20th century extension features a largely glazed façade to the Rochdale Canal and is completed in brick and tiling. Said extension connects Churchgate House to the neighbouring Grade II listed Lee House. Lee House, an 8no storey former warehouse building is completed in an art deco style with steel frame. The building was designed as an extension to the Grade II* listed Churchgate House, and was originally designed to be seventeen storeys until the economic hardship of the Great Depression, 1929-1931, resulted in these plans never being implemented. Internally some original features of note survive, including stain glass along the property's stair core, and support beams throughout the property's floorplate. The basement space is utilised as site car parking and features a concrete floor and exposed modern breezeblock walls.

The neighbouring area forms the heart of Manchester City Centre, with the site lying to the west of Oxford Road, to the south of St Peters Square and north of the Rochdale Canal. Neighbouring built development ranges significantly in age and design, with the height of properties in the locality ranging from three to eight storeys. Neighbouring properties are in a variety of commercial uses, mainly consisting of offices (Class E), food retail units (Class E) and drinking establishments (Sui Generis). A number of listed buildings neighbour the application site, with the Grade II listed Canada House located to the north along Chepstow Street and the Grade II listed St James Building to the east.

Description of development

The application seeks consent for the change of use of the lower Ground Floor/Basement and ground floor of Broadhurst House's contemporary extension from education (Class F1) to offices (Class E), with the installation of 4no louvres and other associated external alterations.

The proposed change of use would see the return of 800sqm that is currently in education use back to offices. The office space would feature a conference space, meeting rooms, ancillary storage rooms, kitchen and WCs. Plant would be located within the basement of Lee House, which would provide the proposed office space with clean air and extract.

Externally, the proposal would see the removal of an existing louvre at basement level on the property's canal elevation, with glazing then being reinstated. Four new louvres would then be installed along the same elevation at basement level that would then be covered by decorative screens. Two existing louvres set within brickwork on the same elevation would then be replaced with new masonry units of the same dimensions as that currently installed.

Waste and recycling facilities would remain unchanged, and are controlled by the property's landlord, with waste stores being located internally on site.

Relevant planning history

145664/LO/2026 - Listed Building Consent for installation of internal air condenser units and associated trunking to basement – Application under consideration.

145410/LO/2026 - Listed Building Consent for installation of 4no louvres to Rochdale Canal elevation and internal alterations to facilitate office use – Application under consideration.

Consultation, notification and publicity responses

Publicity – A site notice and press notice were published. Neighbouring properties were notified of the proposals by letter. No representations were received.

Canal & River Trust – No objection subject to an informative relating to the protection of the adjacent canal.

Environmental Health – No objection subject to conditions relating to construction hours and plant acoustics.

Flood Risk Management – No objection.

Highway Services – No objection subject to conditions relating to cycle parking, waste management, a travel plan and construction management plan.

Historic England – No objection.

Relevant policies

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-Stat1 – Core Growth Area
- Policy JP-Strat2 – City Centre

- Policy JP-S4 – Flood Risk and the Water Environment
- 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 SP1 – Spatial Principles
- Policy EC1 – Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester
- Policy EC2 – Existing Employment Space
- Policy EC3 – The Regional Centre
- Policy CC1 – Primary Economic Development Focus: City Centre and Fringe
- Policy CC9 – Design and Heritage
- Policy EN1 – Design Principle and Strategic Characters Areas
- Policy EN3 – Heritage
- Policy EN9 – Green Infrastructure
- Policy EN14 – Flood Risk
- Policy EN15 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
- Policy EN19 – Waste
- Policy DM1 – Development Management

Saved Unitary Development Plan for Manchester – The following saved UDP Policies are of relevance to this application:
- Policy DC19 – Listed Buildings
- Policy DC26 – Development and Noise

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Chapter 16 – Conserving the Historic Environment

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.

Other Legislative Requirements
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
National Planning Policy for Waste

Assessment

Principle of the Development

The proposal if implemented would contribute to the supply of office space within the City Centre. The application site, whilst an older property, still forms part of the City Centre's office stock, it is recognised that the proposal would revert the site back to its intended use. Providing high quality and sustainably located office stock is a key driver of economic growth within the City Centre, helping to assist its ongoing regeneration. On this basis, the proposal accords in principle with Places for Everyone Plan Policies JP-Strat1 and JP-Strat2, and Core Strategy Policies SP1, EC1, EC2, EC3, CC1 and DM1 subject to the matters discussed below.

Visual Amenity and Heritage

The development would see the removal of an existing louvre, installation of four new louvres and installation of two replacement louvres. The existing louvre to be removed is situated at basement level and glazing would be reinstated, the four louvres to be installed would also be at basement level and be screened from view by decorative screens. The two louvres to be replaced are situated within the property's brick work, the proposed plans confirm the existing plastic units would be done away with and replaced with masonry air bricks.

Whilst it is considered that there would be some visual harm caused to the property by virtue of the installation of a net increase of three louvres within the façade, it is appreciated this would be minimised by the use of decorative screens and would allow for the creation of high quality office space. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that the proposal has been accompanied by an options appraisal that rules out other locations for air intake and extract.

Subject to appropriate planning condition that would require the submission of material samples and require the louvre to be removed to be undertaken as part of the proposed works, the development, on balance, would not cause such a level of visual harm as to justify a refusal. In light of this, the proposal is considered to accord with Places for Everyone Plan Policy JP-P2, Core Strategy Policies SP1, EN1, EN3, CC9 and DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policy DC19, the National Planning Policy Framework, and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Residential Amenity

The application site is in commercial use, though residential buildings lie to the south of the site across the Rochdale Canal, as well as to the west along Great Bridgewater Street. The submission has been accompanied by an acoustic statement that confirms the proposed internal plant would not cause detriment to neighbouring amenity. Environmental Health do not object to the proposal subject to conditions that control hours of construction and that would require the submission of an acoustic verification report. The conditioning of hours of construction lies outside the remit of planning permission and falls within the domain of Environmental Health legislation, as such no such condition will be attached in the event of an approval. Subject to a condition that would require the submission of an acoustic verification report, the development is acceptable in this regard and accords with Core Strategy Policy DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policy DC26, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Impacts on Ecology and the Rochdale Canal

The application site lies along the northern bank of the Rochdale Canal. The submission would not see the loss of any green infrastructure though construction works may impact upon the canal. The Canal & Rivers Trust do not object to the proposals subject to an informative relating to the applicant's responsibilities when working in close proximity to the canal. Subject to such an informative, the development is acceptable in this regard and accords with Core Strategy Policies EN9, EN15 and DM1, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Flood Risk

The application site lies within Flood Zone 1 where the risk of flooding is low, though part of the site lies within an area susceptible to high surface water flooding. Flood Risk have no objection to the proposals. There would be no reduction in permeable surfaces on site. In line with this, the development is acceptable in this regard and accords with Places for Everyone Plan Policy JP-S4, Core Strategy Policies EN14 and DM1, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highway Safety

The proposed development would see the installation of plant within Lee House's basement car park, and the installation of louvres along the property's canal elevation. Highway Services within their consultation response have requested conditions requiring the submission of a construction management plan, travel plan, waste management plan and cycle parking facilities. Considering the scope of the proposed works, how the site lies within a highly sustainable location and how cycle storage facilities are present on site, it is considered the imposition of such conditions would be disproportionate and unreasonable, as such in the event of an approval no such conditions will be attached. In light of this, the development is acceptable in this regard and therefore accords with Core Strategy Policy DM1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Waste Management

Waste and recycling facilities are controlled and organised by the landlord on site, with waste stores being sited internally within the building. The proposal would see the continuation of this relationship. Environmental Health do not object to this arrangement. Subject to a condition that would require the development to accord with this arrangement, the development is acceptable in this regard and is in accordance with Core Strategy policies EN19 and DM1, and the National Planning Policy for Waste.

Conclusion

In light of the above, and subject to appropriate planning condition, it has been found that the development would contribute to the supply of high quality office space within Manchester City Centre, and is therefore in accordance with Places for Everyone Plan Policies JP-Strat1, JP-Strat2, JP-S4 and JP-P2, Manchester Core Strategy Policies SP1, EC1, EC2, EC3, CC1, CC9, EN1, EN3, EN9, EN14, EN15, EN19 and DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies DC19 and DC26, the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act) 1990. On this basis the application is recommended for approval.

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.

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. In this instance negotiation has been able to successfully resolve the identified concerns and issues.

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 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

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

   - LHO-SEV-XX-XX-DR-A-01000 Rev P02: Site Location Plan Full Planning Permission (Churchgate House & Lee House) 145409/FO/2026 (Received 28/05/2026)
   - LHO-SEV-XX-XX-DR-A-00120 Rev P03: Rochdale Canalside Elevation (Received 24/07/2026)
   - P9137 003: Proposed Wider Context Building Plan Level 00
   - P9317 004: Proposed Wider Context Building Plan Level -01
   - P9137 005 Rev A: Proposed GA Level 00 (Received 11/03/2026)
   - P9137 006 Rev A: Proposed GA Level -01 (Received 11/03/2026)
   - P9137 007: Demo GA Level 00
   - P9137 008: Demo GA Level -01
   - P9137 009: Proposed GA Level 00
   - P9137 010: Proposed GA Level -01
   - P9137 011: Ceiling Details Level 00
   - P9137 012: Ceiling Details Level -01
   - P9137 013: Proposed Exit Routes Level -01
   - P9137 015 Rev A: Proposed Cross Section A & B Level 00 & Level -01 (Received 24/07/2026)
   - P9137 017: Existing and Proposed Elevation C
   - P9137 018: Existing and Proposed Elevation D
   - P9317 019 Rev A: Existing and Proposed Elevation E (Received 24/07/2026)
   - P9317 020: Existing and Proposed Elevation F
   - P9137 021: Existing and Proposed Elevation G and H
   - P9317 025 Rev A: Proposed Louvre Cross Section Level 00 & Level -01(Received 24/07/2026)
   - P9137 031: Existing and Proposed Elevations A and B
   - P9137 033: Proposed Exit Routes Level -01 (Received 11/03/2026)
   - P9137 200 Rev A: Proposed Loure Elevation & Section (Received 12/06/2026)
   - 6485-KGA-00-00-DR-ME-0102 Rev P01: Ground Floor Mechanical & Electrical Services (Received 12/06/2026)
   - 6485-KGA-00-B1-DR-ME-0103 Rev P01: Basement Level Mechanical & Electrical Services (Received 12/06/2026)
   - 6486-KGA-00-00-DR-M-0400 Rev P03: Proposed Car Park Services Layout (Received 11/03/2026)
   - 6486-KGA-00-00-DR-M-0900 Rev P02: Ground Floor Proposed Drainage Services Layout (Received 11/03/2026)
   - 6486-KGA-00-B1-DR-M-0901 Rev P02: Basement Proposed Drainage Services Layout (Received 11/03/2026)
   - Design and Access Statement (Prepared by Seven; Reference number LHO-SEV-XX-XX-RP-A-09000 Rev P04; Dated 19/02/2026)

- Heritage Statement (Prepared by Seven; Reference number LHO-SEV-XX-XX-RP-A-09101 Rev P03; Received 12/06/2026)
- Noise Impact Assessment (Prepared by DBX Acoustics; Reference number 26027-R01A-BT; Dated and received 01/05/2026)
- Technical Communication – Subject Louvre Details to Lee House (Prepared by Seven; Dated 28/05/2026; Received 28/05/2026)
- Technical Communication – Subject Ventilation Louvre Options Appraisal and Justification (Prepared by Seven; Dated 09/07/2026; Received 10/07/2026)
- Email correspondence RE waste management (Prepared by Seven Architecture; Dated and Received 27/07/2026)

Received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 10/04/2026, unless specified otherwise.

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

3) a) Notwithstanding the approved plans listed within condition 2 of this decision notice, prior to the commencement of any external works, a scheme for the external decorative louvre/screens and replacement louvres hereby approved, that shall confirm their final layout within the openings they are to be situated in, the setback distance of the air intake and extract equipment situated behind it, as well as a material sample of the decorative panel and external louvre with accurate final coloured finish where applicable, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved details.

b) The new decorative louvre/screens and replacement louvres hereby approved under part a of this condition, shall be installed prior to the first use of the air intake and extraction system and shall be retained and maintained for the lifetime of the development thereafter.

Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the development is acceptable to the City Council as local planning authority in the interests of the visual amenity of the area within which the site is located, as specified in policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

4) a) The development shall proceed in accordance with the measures put forward within the submitted Noise Impact Assessment (Prepared by DBX Acoustics; Reference number 26027-R01A-BT; Dated 01/05/2026; Received 01/05/2026).

b) Prior to the first use of the approved plant, a verification report, which will include post-completion testing, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to validate that the plant equipment achieves a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level in each octave band at the nearest noise sensitive location.

c) In the event of non-conformity with a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level in each octave band, then any measures/changes required to achieve conformity shall be carried out. Any required measures/changes and

verification shall continue until conformity has been achieved and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, before the use can commence.

Reason - To minimise the impact of the development and to prevent a general increase in pre-existing background noise levels around the site. Pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy and saved policy DC26 of the UDP.

5) The existing louvre within the property's southern facing elevation, as shown on drawing no. LHO-SEV-XX-XX-DR-A-00120 Rev P03 (Received 24/07/2026), shall be removed and replaced with glazing as part of the proposed works, with the replacement glazing then being retained and maintained for the lifetime of the development thereafter.

Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the development is acceptable to the City Council as local planning authority in the interests of the visual amenity of the area within which the site is located, as specified in policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

6) The development hereby approved, shall store its waste and recycling in accordance with the email correspondence RE waste management (Prepared by Seven Architecture; Dated and Received 27/07/2026) for its lifetime.

Reason - In order to secure proper waste management in accordance with Core Strategy Policies EN19 and DM1, the National Planning Policy for Waste and the National Planning Policy Framework.

7) The application site shall be used as offices (Class E(g)(i)) and for no other purpose (including any other purpose within Class E of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020 No.757) or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification).

Reason - The use of the premises other than in accordance with the approved use would require further consideration by the Local Planning Authority and may not be appropriate in this locality in accordance with Core Strategy Policies SP1, EC2 and DM1, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Informatives

1) The applicant/developer is advised to contact the Canal & River Trust Infrastructure Services Team on 01782 779909 or email Enquiries.TPWNorth@canalrivertrust.org.uk in order to ensure that any necessary consents are obtained and that the works comply with the Canal & River Trust "Code of Practice for Works affecting the Canal & River Trust" to ensure the waterways are protected and safeguarded.