MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

# Planning

# Delegated Officer Report

## Summary of application details

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| **Application reference:** | PLA-2026-000950 |
| **Application type:** | Full planning permission |
| **Proposal:** | Elevational alterations including new fire escape doors, vehicle doors, glazing manifestation film and louvres. |
| **Site address:** | 70 Great Bridgewater Street, Manchester, M1 5ES |
| **Ward(s):** | Deansgate |
| **Date application valid:** | 20 July 2026 |
| **Applicant name:** | Tony Skipper |
| **Agent (if any):** | Mr Tony Skipper |
| **Case officer:** | Michael Pearson |
| **Recommendation:** | Approve |
| **Date of recommendation:** | 19/08/2026 |

## Description of site, building and/or area

The application relates to the seven storey contemporary office block at 70 Great Bridgewater Street, known as the Havelock Building. The property is completed in a red steel frame, with expansive glazed curtain walling, and concrete panels to its ground and first floors. Recessed louvred openings feature on the buildings rear elevation at basement and ground floor level. A vehicular access features to the west of the building off of Great Bridgewater Street. The site backs onto pedestrian walkways along the Rochdale Canal to the south and east. The site is in use as offices (Class E(g)(i)) but currently lies vacant.

The neighbouring area lies within Manchester City Centre, straddling the area between Oxford Road, Whitworth Street and Albion Street. Said area is characterised by a mix of historic and modern development, with the Grade II listed Rochdale Canal Lock 89, Peveril of the Peak Public House, and Chepstow House being present within the street scene, as well as that of the more modern Bridgewater Hall and Bridgewater Bank. Neighbouring uses include residential dwellings (Class C3), office (Class E), hotel (Class C1) and drinking establishment uses (Sui Generis).

## Description of development

The application seeks consent for elevational alterations and the installation of new rooftop plant.

Proposed elevational alterations comprise of the installation of the following; a new fire escape door to the property's Great Bridgewater Street elevation that shall match existing doors within the elevation; a vehicle access barrier to Great Bridgewater Street; obscuration vinyl film to all floors; patterned obscuration vinyl film to the property's ground and first floors; installation of decorative metal louvres within the property's rear and western facing side elevation at basement

and ground floor level; and reworking of side elevation vehicle access door with louvred panels and door.

The proposed rooftop plant comprises of 19no new heating and cooling condensing units, and associated pipework within the property's plant enclosure.

## Relevant planning history

140428/JO/2024 - Removal of Condition 12 (Street Trees) attached to planning permission 129081/FO/2021 – Approved March 2025.

137935/FO/2023 - Changes to wall arrangement along the west elevation – Approved October 2023.

129081/FO/2021 - Partial demolition and reconfiguration of 70 Great Bridgewater Street to create a new office building (Use Class E), including the replacement of building facades, a 2-storey rooftop extension and alterations to the internal layout including the infilling of the central atrium, servicing and cycle parking, access and associated work – Approved April 2021.

055277/FO/CITY3/98 - Erection of a four storey office development – Approved December 1998.

## Consultation, notification and publicity responses

Publicity – A site notice and press notice were published, neighbouring properties were notified of the development by letter. No representations were received.

Canal & River Trust – No objection subject to an informative relating to construction works adjacent to canals.

Environmental Health – No objection subject to conditions relating to construction hours and acoustics, and an informative relating to construction works.

Highway Services – No objection subject to a condition requiring the submission of a construction management plan. Clarification should be sought that proposed outward opening doors are fire doors and that there is sufficient room for a vehicle to wait by the proposed gated access without blocking the highway.

## 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-Strat1 – Core Growth Area
- Policy JP-Strat2 – City Centre
- Policy JP-G8 – A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- 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 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 EN15 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
- Policy DM1 – Development Management

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

National Planning Policy Framework August 2026 (NPPF)
- Chapter 7 – Building a strong, competitive economy
- Chapter 14 – Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Chapter 15 – Promoting Sustainable Transport
- Chapter 19 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- Chapter 20 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

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

## Assessment

Principle of the Development

The proposed development would see the external alteration of an existing property. Given how the office use would remain unchanged, how through the implementation of the proposal the site would be fully occupied, and how the external alterations are to only supplement and enhance the approved use on site, the proposals are considered would continue to assist in the regeneration of Manchester City Centre and is therefore in accordance with Places For Everyone Plan Policies JP-Strat1 and JP-Strat2, Core Strategy Policies SP1, EC1, EC3, CC1 and DM1 and the National Planning Policy Framework in principle, subject to the matters discussed below.

Visual Amenity and Heritage

The application site as existing, is a high quality office development finished in a red steel frame, with expansive glazed curtain walling, and concrete panels to its ground and first floors. Its contemporary design is considered to contribute positively to the appearance of the locality.

The most visually notable change to the appearance of the site is the installation of obscuration vinyl film, and architectural obscuration vinyl film. Whilst it is appreciated that this will cause a change in how the property's glazing is appreciated, as these alterations are reversible, there will be no permanent harm caused to the appearance of the application property, and planning condition can secure the submission of material samples of the proposed architectural obscuration vinyl film to ensure they are of high quality. Subject to such a condition, the impact of the proposals in this regard are considered to be acceptable.

Proposed alterations to the property's western facing side elevation vehicle access, including louvred panels, are considered to occupy a position on the building in which public views of it are heavily constrained, with this being limited to the vehicle access itself. Subject to planning condition that would require the submission of material samples, it is considered this element of the development would cause a low level of harm to the appearance of the application site and neighbouring street scene. Proposed louvres would be situated within existing louvred openings within the building but with a lesser set back than that of the existing units, this being 90mm. Whilst it is regrettable that a greater setback could not be achieved, this distance is still within an

acceptable range and it is also acknowledged these louvres are confined to the property's rear and western facing side elevation where their visibility is limited. In the event of an approval planning condition will require the submission of material samples of the proposed louvres in order to ensure they are of high quality. The doorway to be inserted into the property's Great Bridgewater Street elevation would be confined to an existing opening and would not upset the balance of the property's fenestration, subject to confirmation of the exact dimensions of the frame of the doorway and material samples, this element of the development is acceptable.

Proposed rooftop plant would sit below the property's plant screen and thus would not impact upon wider views of the application site. Neighbouring listed buildings, this being the Grade II listed Rochdale Canal Lock 89, Peveril of the Peak Public House, and Chepstow House are considered to derive their significance from their architectural form rather than from their setting, which is already heavily compromised. On this basis, and how the most impactful elements of the proposal will not be readily appreciated in the same context as that of the aforementioned listed buildings, the proposed works are not considered to impact upon their significance.

On balance, when taking into account the proposal would secure the full occupation of the application property, would only cause a very low level of harm to the appearance of the building, and would be reversible, the proposals are acceptable in this regard. Subject to the aforementioned conditions, the development is acceptable in this regard and accords with Places for Everyone Plan Policy JP-P2, Core Strategy Policies SP1, CC9, EN1, EN3 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

Impacts to neighbouring amenity are only likely to stem from the noise emitted by the proposed plant to the property's roof. As stated previously within this report, a high number of residential dwellings lie within the locality to the north-east, east and south of the site. Environmental Health do not object to the proposal's subject to conditions requiring the submission of an acoustic assessment for the proposed plant, and one controlling the hours of construction. In light of how hours of construction fall under the remit of Environmental Health and not planning permission, such a condition will not be attached in the event of an approval, with it being considered to be unnecessary and unreasonable. Subject to a condition that would require the submission of a plant acoustic assessment, 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.

Ecology

The application site neighbours the Rochdale Canal. The Canal & Rivers Trust do not object to the proposals subject to an informative relating to protocols when carrying out construction works adjacent to a canal. Subject to such an informative, the development is acceptable in this regard and therefore accords with Places for Everyone Plan Policy JP-G8, Core Strategy Policies EN15 and DM1, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highway Safety

Pedestrian and vehicular access to the site is made from Great Bridgewater Street. The site's vehicular access gives way to a basement car park. As part of the proposed works a vehicle barrier would be installed to said access, and the existing vehicular access door would be remodelled. In addition to this, a fire escape door would be installed to the front of the site along Great Bridgewater Street. Highway Services do not object to the development subject to a condition requiring the submission of a construction management plan. Due to the small scale

nature of the development, it is considered unreasonable and unnecessary to attach such a condition in the event of an approval. Highway Services also sought clarification on if the proposed outward opening doorway to Great Bridgewater Street is to be used as a fire escape, and that the proposed vehicle access is set far enough into the site access to allow for one vehicle to wait by it without blocking the highway. It has been confirmed that the aforementioned door is a fire door and that the set back of the vehicle access gate is 5m. On this basis, the proposal is acceptable subject to a condition that requires external doors to open away from the public highway unless they are to be used as fire exits. Subject to such a condition, the development accords with Core Strategy Policy DM1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

## 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.

## Conclusion

In light of the above, and subject to appropriate planning condition, it has been found that the development is acceptable and is therefore in accordance with Places for Everyone Plan Policies JP-Strat1, JP-Strat2, JP-J1 and JP-P2, Core Strategy Policies SP1, EC1, EC3, CC1, CC9, EN1, EN3, EN15 and DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies DC19 and DC26, the National Planning Policy Framework, and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. On this basis the application is recommended for approval.

**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:

   - 06183-5PA-02-B1x00-D-A-2300 Rev P02: Location Plan
   - 06183-5PA-02-B1x01-D-A-2301 Rev P02: Main Entrance Floor_Planning Amendment
   - 06183-5PA-02-B1x00-D-A-2302 Rev P02: Canal Level_Planning Amendment
   - 06183-5PA-02-B1xRF-D-A-2401 Rev P03: General Arrangement – Proposed – Level RF (Received 07/08/2026)
   - 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2401 Rev P02: Proposed North Elevation
   - 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2402 Rev P02: Proposed South Elevation
   - 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2403 Rev P02: Proposed East Elevation
   - 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2404 Rev P02: Proposed West Elevation
   - 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2405 Rev P02: Slot ventilation openings _ Planning Amendments
   - 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2406 Rev P02: New Carpark Entrance_Planning Amendments
   - 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2407 Rev P01: Proposed Section AA (Received 07/08/2026)
   - MAIMA ULTRA 36 Product Specification
   - ImagePerfect 7804 Light Silver Forst (FR) Product Specification
   - Email Correspondence – Vinyl Material Samples (Prepared by 5 Plus Architecture; Dated and Received 07/08/2026)
   - Design and Access Statement Rev 1 (Prepared by 5 Plus Architecture; Dated 02/07/2028)

   Received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 07/07/2026, 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) Prior to the commencement of any works in relation to the installation of the perforated metal panels hereby approved, as shown on drawings 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2402 Rev P02, 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2404 Rev P02 and 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2405 Rev P02, material samples of the panels shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority. The approved panels shall have a minimum setback of 90mm from the property's façade. The development will then proceed in accordance with the approved details, which 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) Prior to the commencement of any works in relation to the vehicle access works hereby approved, as shown on drawing nos. 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2404 Rev P02 and 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2406 Rev P02, material samples and final details of the new pedestrian access door, vehicular access door and louvres that, shall show their layout within the reveal of the access, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority. The development will then proceed in accordance with the approved details, which 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.

5) Prior to the commencement of any works in relation to the architectural film hereby approved, as shown on drawings 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2401 Rev P02 and 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2404 Rev P02, exact details and material samples of the film shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority. The development will then proceed in accordance with the approved details, which 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.

6) Prior to the commencement of any works in regard to the installation of the doorway and cladded infill panel to Great Bridgewater Street hereby approved, as shown on drawing number 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2401 Rev P02, exact detail of its material finish, frame dimensions and layout within the reveal, together with product specifications, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority. The development will then proceed in accordance with the approved details, which 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.

7) a) Prior to the installation of any plant hereby approved, either a scheme that demonstrates that any plant equipment will achieve a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level in each octave band at the nearest noise sensitive location, or a scheme showing a method to acoustically treat/insulate any plant equipment so as to achieve a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level in each octave band at the nearest noise sensitive location,

shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

b) Prior to the first use of the plant hereby approved, 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 safeguard the amenities of nearby residents, pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

8) The obscuration film hereby approved shall be completed in accordance with the following documentation:

- 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2401 Rev P02: Proposed North Elevation
- 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2402 Rev P02: Proposed South Elevation
- 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2403 Rev P02: Proposed East Elevation
- 06183-5PA-04-B1xZZ-D-A-2404 Rev P02: Proposed West Elevation
- ImagePerfect 7804 Light Silver Forst (FR) Product Specification
- Email Correspondence – Vinyl Material Samples (Prepared by 5 Plus Architecture; Dated and Received 07/08/2026)

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

9) All external doors, except from those used as fire escapes, of the development hereby approved, shall open away from the public highway.

Reason - In the interest of highway safety in accordance with Core Strategy Policies CC5 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 01782779909 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.

2) Information for Developers guidance documents can be downloaded using the following link: http://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/500207/planning_and_regeneration/1962/additional_planning_guidance/3

3) The applicant is required to discuss and agree any requirements for licensing, hoarding / scaffolding, skips and temporary points of access (Section 50) with MCC's Highways Licensing Team via Email to highwaylicences@manchester.gov.uk.

4) The applicant is required to discuss and agree any requirements for temporary pedestrian and traffic management with MCC's Event and Traffic Management Team via Email to highwaynetworkmanagement@manchester.gov.uk.