MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Delegated Officer Report

Summary of application details

Application reference:	PLA-2026-000401
Application type:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
Proposal:	Listed Building Consent for internal alterations to allow for creation of ground floor music venue.
Site address:	New Century Hall 34 Hanover Street Manchester M4 4AH
Ward(s):	Piccadilly
Date application valid:	20 July 2026
Applicant name:	Abby Mudge
Agent (if any):	Ellie Philcox
Case officer:	Michael Pearson
Recommendation:	Approve
Date of recommendation:	07/09/2026

Description of site, building and/or area

The application relates to the ground floor/former basement of the Grade II listed Confrence Hall attached to New Century House. The former fourteen storey office building and attached two storey conference hall date from 1963, with both featuring a striking external anodised aluminium frame superstructure with opaque glass-panel cladding. The attached conference hall has undergone significant internal and external alteration to facilitate a ground floor food hall use (Class E) and first floor music venue (Sui Generis). Internally, the basement still features original concrete columns and waffle slab ceiling, though its southern facing façade now features wide bi-folding and louvred openings across its length. Access to the existing food hall and music venue use is gained from Sadlers Yard.

The neighbouring area constitutes that of NOMA, a regeneration scheme covering the land within the Co-operative Group's ownership, that lies along the northern edge of Manchester City Centre, with much of the surrounding area to the south also lying within the Shudehill Conservation Area. Neighbouring built development around Sadler's Yard consists of a high number of Grade II listed buildings, including the Hanover Building, Old Bank Building, New Century House itself, Cooperative Society Building, Holyoake House, Redfern Building and CIS Tower. Neighbouring uses are comprised of a variety of commercial office and restaurant uses (Use Class E and Sui Generis).

Description of development

The application seeks listed building consent for internal alterations to allow for the creation of a ground floor music venue.

To facilitate the proposed use, the existing food hall units, bar, kitchen and associated fixings would be removed. Supporting information has accompanied the submission detailing that these works will be undertaken by hand, with historic material being protected during the works.

In its place a solid partition would be installed to sub-divide the space into two spaces, one for the aforementioned music venue, and the other for the remaining food hall use. Said partition would abut one of the property's concrete columns, two acoustic partitions would then be installed in the space between said column and the property's mullions.

New M&E, lighting and speakers would be installed, with existing air circulation plant being rationalised.

Relevant planning history

PLA-2026-000952 - Change of use of part ground floor of from food hall (Class E) to live music venue (Sui Generis) – Application under consideration.

132281/JO/2021 - S73 application to vary condition 2 (Approved Dwgs and Documents), 4 (Materials) and amend condition 11 (Acoustic Insulation -due to single tenancy) attached to app ref no 124348/FO/2019 as amended by 130703 (amendments to installation of sound system including position, change of dumb waiter location, additional back of house mezzanine level and amendments to plant routes and openings) – Approved January 2022.

132275/JO/2021 - S19 application to vary condition 2 (Approved Dwgs and Documents) and 3 (Materials) attached to app ref no 124349/LO/2019 as amended by 130704 (amendments to installation of sound system including position, change of dumb waiter location, additional back of house mezzanine level and amendments to plant routes and openings) – Approved January 2022.

130704/JO/2021 - S19 application to vary conditions 2 (Approved Dwgs (amendments to include stabilisation to curtain walling and changes to details of dance floor within Concert Hall)), 3 (Materials) and 4 (Details of Sprinkler System) attached to application ref no 124349/LO/2019 – Approved November 2021.

130703/JO/2021 - S73 application to vary conditions 2 (Approved Dwgs (amendments to include stabilisation to curtain walling and changes to details of dance floor within Concert Hall)), 4 (Materials), 21 (Details of Sprinkler System) and C23 (Final Details of Landscaping) attached to application ref no 124348/FO/2019 – Approved November 2021.

124349/LO/2019 - Listed Building Consent for internal and external works associated with change of use from B1 (Offices), D1 (Non-Residential Institution) and D2 (Assembly and Leisure) use to mixed Sui Generis Use comprising A3 (restaurant and cafe), A4 (drinking establishment) (Ground floor), D1 non-residential (creative school) (basement) and D1 (flexible events and conference facilities) / D2 (music/performance space) (1st floor) and other ancillary uses and associated external alterations related to the reuse and refurbishment of the building including, creation of new openings to Sadler's Yard elevations; creation of new public realm (including a pedestrian connection between Sadler's Yard and Miller Street) installation of external plant and construction of a concrete screen along Miller Street – Approved November 2019.

124348/FO/2019 - Change of use from B1 (Offices), D1 (Non-Residential Institution) and D2 (Assembly and Leisure) use to mixed comprising A3 (restaurant and cafe), A4 (drinking establishment) (Ground floor), D1 non-residential (creative school) (basement) and D1 (flexible events and conference facilities) / D2 (music/performance space) (1st floor) (Sui Generis) and other ancillary uses and associated external alterations related to the reuse and refurbishment

of the building including, creation of new openings to Sadler's Yard elevations; creation of new public realm (including a pedestrian connection between Sadler's Yard and Miller Street) installation of external plant and construction of a concrete screen along Miller Street – Approved November 2019.

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.

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-P2 – Heritage
- Policy JP-P3 – Cultural Facilities
- Policy JP-P4 – New Retail and Leisure Uses in Town Centres

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 EC3 – The Regional Centre
- Policy CC1 – Primary Economic Development Focus (City Centre and fringe)
- Policy CC2 – Retail
- Policy CC4 – Visitors – Tourism, Culture and Leisure
- Policy CC5 – Transport
- Policy CC9 – Design and Heritage
- Policy CC10 – A Place for Everyone
- Policy C10 – Leisure and the Evening Economy
- Policy EN1 – Design Principle and Strategic Characters Areas
- Policy EN3 – Heritage
- Policy EN15 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
- Policy EN19 – Waste
- 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 DC18 – Conservation Areas
- 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

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.

Assessment

New Century House, dating from 1963, is a striking piece of post-war modernist architecture, exemplified in its aluminium frame and glass façade, with its low lying conference hall extension adding additional visual interest to its form. Internally, in respect of the submitted proposals, the building also retains internal features of note, including original concrete columns and waffle ceiling detail. The main body of New Century House, its 14 storey tower, lies unoccupied, though as previously mentioned, its attached conference hall lies in mixed use as a live music venue and food hall. As the regeneration of the NOMA estate and neighbouring area continues, and market demands change, it has been identified that the existing food hall use has not performed to expectations, with local demand not meeting expectations, with this being put down to the site being removed from the City Centre's retail core. The proposed development would seek to give the site's ground floor a viable long term use that would secure the future of the listed building, as well as assist neighbouring regeneration efforts in making NOMA a destination for the evening and leisure economy.

The submission has been accompanied by a methodology for the site's soft strip. Said works, would see only see the removal of non-original partitions, kitchen equipment and M&E associated with the existing food hall use. On this basis, the proposals are considered to have a slight beneficial impact, with the removal of non-original fabric.

The most impactful element of the works would be that of the installation of the sub-dividing acoustic partition that would effectively split the ground floor space into two units. Said partition would impact upon how the ground floor is perceived, with it no longer reading as one interrupted space. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that exact details on how the partition would abut the property's ceiling and external mullions would need to be secured by planning condition. Notwithstanding this, it is also appreciated that the partition has been designed so as to avoid the property's waffle ceiling detail and would not enclose any of its concrete columns. Subject to planning condition, this element of the development, whilst largely reversible, would still cause a low level level of harm to the significance of the listed building.

As part of the proposed music use, existing M&E would be rationalised, helping to expose the property's waffle ceiling, said works are considered to result in a slight benefit, helping to highlight a feature of architectural note. Notwithstanding this, new speakers and lighting are proposed throughout the space, some of which will be located within the concrete waffle ceiling. In line with this, it is considered necessary in the event of an approval to require planning condition to secure the submission of exact and final layout and fixing details, together with an options appraisal of other locations. Subject to such a condition, this element of the works on balance would have a neutral impact on the significance of the listed building.

Notable benefits secured via the implementation of the proposals would be the removal of non-original M&E, the long term occupation of the listed building, and contributions to local regeneration efforts.

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 line with the above, it has been found the proposals would incur a low level of harm to the significance of the listed building. Notwithstanding this, public benefits have been identified in the form of the rationalisation of the property's M&E, securing the long term use of the listed building, as well as helping to create a commercial destination that would support local regeneration efforts. On this basis, the identified public benefits would outweigh the recognised harm, and therefore the proposals would meet the requirements as set out under Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in relation to preservation, and accords with Places for Everyone Plan Policies JP-Strat1, JP-Strat2, JP-P2, JP-P3 and JP-P4, Core Strategy Policies SP1, EC3, CC1, CC2, CC4, CC5, CC9, CC10, C10, EN1, EN3, EN15, EN19 and DM1, Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies DC18, 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.

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:

   • 0886-P3A-SL-XX-DR-A-02001 Revision P01: Location Plan

   • 0886-P3A-ST-XX-DR-A-05001 Revision P01: Proposed Site Plan

   • 0886-P3A-XX-00-DR-A-03001 Revision P01: Demolition Ground Floor Plan

   • 0886-P3A-XX-00-DR-A-05001 Revision P04: Proposed Ground Floor Plan (Received 25/08/2026)

   • 0886-P3A-XX-XX-DR-A-05101 Revision P04: Proposed Sections: Section A-A, B-B and C-C (Received 02/09/2026)

   • 0886-P3A-XX-XX-DR-A-22401 Revision P02: Internal Wall Details (Received 01/09/2026)

   • 0886-P3A-XX-XX-DR-A-22402 Revision P04: Internal Wall / Façade Details (Received 25/08/2026)

   • NCH-0312-0011.01 Rev A: HVAC – Proposed Alterations

   • NCH-0312-0013.01 Rev A: HVAC – Demolition and Removal

   • Material example, with 10mm high density foam pad placed behind each steel uni-strut channel/ section (Received 25/08/2026)

   • Covering Letter (Prepared by Euan Kellie; Dated 07/07/2026)

   • Design and Access Statement (Prepared by Project 3 Architects; Dated July 2026)

   • Heritage Statement (Prepared by Levrant; Dated May 2026)

   • Project Technical Memorandum – MEP (Dated 14/05/2026)

   • LGH-RVXT3-E Commercial Series Product Specification (Prepared by Mitsubishi Electric)

   • LGH-RVXT3-E Technical Data Sheet (Received 13/08/2026)

   • Proposed Soft Strip Heritage Note (Prepared by Levrant; Dated July 2026; Received 24/07/2026)

• Soft Strip Out Specification (Prepared by Edwards; Report Reference BCD/NO.106; Dated 21/07/2026; Received 24/07/2026)

• Methodology and approach - Soft Strip Out and enabling works (Prepared by Tilbury Hall; Dated 21/07/2026; Received 24/07/2026)

Received by Manchester City Council as the Local Planning Authority on 19/05/2026, 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 installation of the internal partitions between the building's mullions and existing concrete column and structural steelwork, as shown on drawing 0886-P3A-XX-XX-DR-A-22402 Revision P04 (Received 25/08/2026), hereby approved, material samples of the final finish of the internal partitions shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

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, saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4) Prior to the installation of the solid partition as shown on drawing no.0886-P3A-XX-00-DR-A-05001 Revision P04 (Received 25/08/2026) and 0886-P3A-XX-XX-DR-A-05101 Revision P04 (Received 02/09/2026), final details and material samples of its final finish, including steel angle, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be implemented in accordance with the approved details

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, saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and the National Planning Policy Framework.

5) Prior to the installation of any new lighting and speakers, final details in regard to their layout within the existing waffle ceiling, and their method of fixing, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority. The development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved details.

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, saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6) Prior to the installation of the solid partition as shown on drawing no.0886-P3A-XX-00-DR-A-05001 Revision P04 (Received 25/08/2026) and 0886-P3A-XX-XX-DR-A-05101 Revision P04 (Received 02/09/2026), exact details of its method of affixing to the listed building shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council

as Local Planning Authority. Wherever possible existing fixing points shall be utilised. The development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved details.

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, saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and the National Planning Policy Framework.

7) Speakers shall only be clamped to existing concrete columns in accordance with the submitted material example, with 10mm high density foam pad placed behind each steel uni-strut channel/ section (Received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 25/08/2026), for the lifetime of the development.

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, saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and the National Planning Policy Framework.

8) The proposed soft strip, as shown on drawing no.0886-P3A-XX-00-DR-A-03001 Revision P01 (Received 19/05/2026), shall be carried out in accordance with the following documentation:

- Proposed Soft Strip Heritage Note (Prepared by Levrant; Dated July 2026)
- Soft Strip Out Specification (Prepared by Edwards; Report Reference BCD/NO.106; Dated 21/07/2026)
- Methodology and approach - Soft Strip Out and enabling works (Prepared by Tilbury Hall; Dated 21/07/2026)

All received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 24/07/2026.

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, saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and the National Planning Policy Framework.