

Planning Department
Manchester City Council
Via email

3 June 2026

[REDACTED]

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: 145583/FO/2026 | Downtown Victoria North II, Land at 85 Rochdale Road, Manchester, M4 4HY. Adjacent to the Marble Arch Pub (Grade II, 1888). Application for demolition of C19th buildings, erection of substantial tower and associated landscaping.

The attention of the Victorian Society has been brought to the application for a 17-storey tower next to the Grade II-listed Marble Arch Public House. Having reviewed the application carefully, and the case having been discussed by our Buildings Committee, we **raise serious concerns** to this application in its current form.

The Marble Arch pub is a Grade II-listed building, meaning that it is recognised for its national significance and special interest. Built in 1888, this Gothic Revival building with its unusual use of 'Caernarfon' arches is noted for its original interior decorative work and fine architectural merit. Particularly distinct are the Marble Arch's soaring brick chimneys and piercing gable. The setting of the Marble Arch is set to be directly harmed by this application and the serious negative impact that the erection of the 17-storey tower will have on the site.

Impact on Setting

The Committee discussed this case in detail at both their November and June meetings. Concerns were raised as to the proximity of the proposed tower to the Marble Arch, and the harmful impact that this would have on the setting of the listed building.

The height and architectural language of the proposed tower, when compared to the height and language of the C19th pub, is not sympathetic and will cause less than substantial harm to the setting of the pub. However, we recognise that efforts have been made to revise the scheme from the proposals we saw in November 2025, and welcome this attitude of change.

As a Society, we encourage the green space proposed to be set between the 17-storey tower and

**Campaigning for
Victorian & Edwardian
Built Heritage**

The Victorian Society

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the listed building, and we recommend that this be further developed. Pushing the proposed tower closer to the previously approved (and now under construction) *Downtown Victoria North I* will lessen the impact of the tower by increasing the space between the tower and pub and by demarcating the two buildings and languages more clearly. The historic form and character of the Marble Arch is distinct and recognisable; it contributes well to its setting and to Manchester's historic character. The tower, in its current proposed form, does not enter a sympathetic dialogue with the pub; it argues and contradicts it. By moving it towards the approved tower, and creating a larger pocket of public greenery, the architectural conversation moves towards the two towers allowing the Marble Arch to stand on its own and to be appreciated in its own right. This would lessen the impact of the height and language of the tower on the setting of the listed building and minimise the proposed harm from the scheme.

As a Society, we understand the need for increased housing provision within Greater Manchester, and that this proposal will bring some public benefit with further housing. However, we note the omission of any affordable housing within the project, which does reduce the public benefits of the scheme somewhat.

Conclusion

The Victorian Society remains concerned by the proposed 17-storey tower and its impact on the Grade II Marble Arch Pub. We recommend that the positive steps taken to separate the proposed tower and pub by introducing greenery are continued further, allowing for a greater public green space to be created, which in turn would minimise the impact of the proposals on the setting of the listed building.

If you could keep the Victorian Society updated on your decision in due course, I would be very grateful.

Yours faithfully

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of the Northern and Welsh Conservation Adviser.

Northern and Welsh Conservation Adviser