MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Delegated Officer Report

Summary of application details

Application reference:	PLA-2026-001334
Application type:	Full planning permission
Proposal:	Retention of 1no. security camera.
Site address:	Power Hall, Museum of Science and Industry, Liverpool Road, Manchester, M3 4JP
Ward(s):	Deansgate
Date application valid:	13 August 2026
Applicant name:	The Board of Trustees of the Science Museum
Agent (if any):	Andrew Burns
Case officer:	Jack Naven
Recommendation:	Approve
Date of recommendation:	05 October 2026

Description of site, building and/or area

The Science and Industry Museum (formerly known as the Museum of Science and Industry) is a large museum devoted to the development of science, technology and industry, with emphasis on the city's achievements in these fields.

The museum is part of the Science Museum Group, a non-departmental public body of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, having merged with the National Science Museum in 2012.

The large and complex former "Liverpool Road Railway Station" is spread across several historic buildings that are connected by walkways and outdoor spaces and contains a significant collection of Grade I and Grade II listed buildings The site is located within the Castlefield Conservation Area.

The wider museum site is bounded to the north by a number of large warehouses including the site of the new Aviva Studios, to the south by Liverpool Road, to the east by Lower Byrom Street, and to the west by the River Irwell as well as Stephenson's Viaduct.

Throughout the museum complex, there are a number of outdoor spaces and walkways that allow visitors to explore the historic buildings and enjoy views of the surrounding area. The museum's layout is designed to be both educational and engaging, while retaining the industrial character and general spatial layout associated with its historic use.

The application site relates to the Power Hall, a Grade II Listed building within the Science & Industry Museum complex.

The Grade II listed building was constructed in the mid-19th century as a shipping shed providing trans-shipment between carts and rail wagons

Description of development

The application seeks planning permission for the retention of 1no. security camera.

Related Applications

PLA-2026-001331 - Listed Building Consent for the retention of 1no. internal security camera at New Warehouse.
To be approved alongside this application.

PLA-2026-001410 - - Listed Building Consent for the retention of 1no. internal security camera at Power Hall.
To be approved alongside this application.

Consultation, notification and publicity responses

Publicity - Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties. A site notice and local press advert were also produced. At the time of writing this report, no representations have been received because of this publicity.

Relevant policies

The effect of the proposal on the affected heritage asset has been considered under the following criteria:

Places for Everyone - Joint Development Plan Document (PfE), for nine of the 10 boroughs which make up Greater Manchester, adopted on 21st of March 2024:

- Policy JP-Strat2 - City Centre
- Policy JP-P1 - Sustainable Places
- Policy JP-P2 - Heritage

Manchester Core Strategy - Development Plan Document 2012-2027 ("the Core Strategy"), adopted by the City Council on the 11th of July 2012:

- Policy CC9 - Design and Heritage
- Policy EN1 - Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas
- Policy EN3 - Heritage
- Policy SP1 - Spatial Principles
- Policy DM1 - Development Management

Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (UDP) (1995) - for the reasons outlined below, the following saved UDP Policies are of relevance to this application:

- Policy DC18 - Conservation Areas
- Policy DC19 - Listed Buildings

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2026)

- Paragraph 17 outlines three dimensions to achieve sustainable development: economic, social and environmental
- Chapter 14 - Achieving well-designed places
    - DP3 - Key Principles for Well-Designed Places
    - DP4 - The Design Process
- Chapter 20 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
    - HE4 - Securing the Conservation of Heritage Assets
    - HE5 - Assessing Effects on Heritage Assets
    - HE6 - Proposals Affecting Designated Heritage Assets
    - HE9 - Conservation Areas

Section 66 Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the "Listed Building Act") states that “in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State 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”.

This requires more than a simple balancing exercise and case law has considerable importance, and weight should be given to any impact upon a designated heritage asset but in particular upon the desirability of preserving the setting with a strong presumption to preserve the asset.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the "Listed Building Act") provides that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development that affects the setting or character of a conservation area the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. S149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) – Historic Environment states that public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph17). Public benefits should flow from the Proposed Development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.

Public benefits may also include heritage benefits, such as:
- Sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the
- contribution of its setting;
- Reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset;

Guide to Development in Manchester SPD (2007)

Assessment

Principle of Development

A security analysis has been conducted by the Science Museum Group across the entire site complex. This analysis reviewed two potential areas of high foot traffic in to or around the complex that were not covered by existing security camera infrastructure. In order to ensure that the overall Museum complex is secure, it is important that these two areas in question were addressed.

In this case, the security camera captures a prominent corner of the building situated on the corner Liverpool Road and Lower Byrom Street. This view of the building, with the Science + Industry sign located in front of this corner, acts as the first significant view of the site when approaching down Liverpool Road from Deansgate and Deansgate Station.

The corner was recently redeveloped as part of the various works to upgrade the Power Hall and to bring it back into use. The almost floor to ceiling height glazing, flanked on either side by floor to ceiling height timber boards, is of the highest quality, but the significant glazed element could be a target for vandalism or anti-social behaviour.

Therefore, as no camera covered this corner, the security analysis determined that a security camera was required here in order to meet sufficient security requirements.

In determining whether the proposed works are acceptable, the main issue to consider is the impact these works have on visual amenity and have had on the historic character and fabric of the listed building itself and to establish whether the public benefits, including heritage benefits, outweigh any harm caused to the significance of the heritage asset.

Visual Amenity

The security camera would be sited on a non-historic timber soffit, in the upper hand right corner of the recessed opening and as such would not be readily noticeable from street level.

Whilst located in a prominent viewpoint between the two elevations mainly visible from the street scene, the security camera would be sited on a non-historic timber soffit, in the upper hand right corner of the recessed opening and as such would not be readily noticeable from street level.

The camera itself is limited size with minor visual impact. The black colour of the camera helps with making the camera blend into the timber and makes the visual impact of the intervention much less noticeable.

Heritage

<u>Assessment of significance</u>

The Grade II listed Power Hall was constructed in the mid-19th century as a shipping shed providing trans shipment between carts and rail wagons.

Architecturally it is of moderate significance being an historically important example of a specific railway and industrial architectural typology dating from the Victorian era, a key period in the growth of rail transport when the passenger services had been replaced with goods services. Its large scale not only contributes to its presence as a landmark in the area, it reflects the expansion of rail transport, and of the city as a centre of industry and trade.

The Power Hall has a high group value as component of the unique estate of buildings at Liverpool Road. The museum is a well-known and well-used visitor destination and learning resource within the city, experienced by a large number of people. It has a high communal value. The building and wider site form are a key part of, and major positive contributor to, the Castlefield Conservation Area.

For the area where these particular works are located, it shall be located on a relatively modern element of timber boards that were installed in the most recent renovation of the Power Hall. Although not original, the timber boards were designed to be sympathetic to the historical use of the building. It is situated in close proximity to original brickwork.

Impact on Heritage

The security camera would be sited on a non-historic timber soffit, in the upper hand right corner of the recessed opening and as such would not be readily noticeable from street level.

Whilst located in a prominent viewpoint between the two elevations mainly visible from the street scene, the security camera would be sited on a non-historic timber soffit, in the upper hand right corner of the recessed opening and as such would not be readily noticeable from street level.

The camera itself is limited size with minor visual impact. The black colour of the camera helps with making the camera blend into the timber and makes the visual impact of the intervention much less noticeable.

There are no visible wires on the external face of the building.

Whilst there has been some physical harm to the timber board by installing the camera, this is not an original feature of the building.

The small and relatively discreet camera is considered to not have a significant impact on the surrounding conservation area.

Overall, it is considered that there would be a very low level of harm caused to the significance of the Grade II listed building as a result of these works.

On this basis, the proposed works would be consistent with Places for Everyone policies JP-P1 and JP-P2, Core Strategy policies SP1, CC9, DM1 and EN3, UDP policies DC18 and DC19, and the National Planning Policy Framework policies HE4, HE5, and HE6.

In accordance with sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Local Planning Authority have had special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, and have had special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area in the decision making process and are satisfied that the decision made in assessing the impact on the heritage assets accords with this.

Public Benefits

As harm has been identified, policy HE6 of the NPPF requires that where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset, the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal.

The public benefits have been considered in light of para 17 of the NPPF which outlines the three dimensions to achieve sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

Ensuring that the security of the site is adequate means that the site can continue to operate effectively as a part of the wider Museum use, which brings an economic and social benefit to the area, as well as ensures that the building continues to be occupied, which in itself is an important benefit. The safety that the camera brings to the many visitors of the Museum is also considered to be a significant public benefit.

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

It is considered that this application is considered acceptable, as the works are considered to cause a very low level of harm to the special interest and the historic character of the Grade II listed building which would be outweighed by the public benefits outlined above and no harm upon the surrounding conservation area.

The proposal is therefore in accordance with Places for Everyone Plan policies JP-P1 and JP-P2, Manchester Core Strategy policies CC9, EN3, DM1 and SP1, UDP policies DC18 and DC19, NPPF polices HE4, HE5, and HE6, and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Article 35 Declaration

Officers have worked with the applicant/agent in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the application.

Recommendation: **Approve**

Conditions attached to this decision

1) The development must be begun not later than three years beginning with the date of this permission.

   Reason - Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents, received by Manchester City Council as the Local Planning Authority on 12 August 2026:

   - Location Plan V1
   - Proposed Ground Floor Plans E(100)
   - Proposed Power Hall Plan and Elevation P(410)
   - Proposed Security Camera Technical Sheet

   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 and saved policies DC18 and DC19.

3) The camera, as shown on 'Proposed Power Hall Plan and Elevation P(410)', shall be finished in a Black RAL 9005 colour and shall remain this colour as long as the camera remains in situ.

   Reason - In the interests of visual amenity and because the proposed works affect a building which is included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest and careful attention to building work is required to protect the character and appearance of this building and to ensure consistency in accordance with policy and EN3 of the Core Strategy and saved policy DC19.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester.