MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Delegated Officer Report

Summary of application details

Application reference:	PLA-2026-001438
Application type:	Full planning permission
Proposal:	Installation of roof mounted plant.
Site address:	John Dalton Building, Chester Street, Manchester, M1 5GD
Ward(s):	Deansgate
Date application valid:	25 August 2026
Applicant name:	Mr Andy Potter
Agent (if any):	Mr Daniel Labella
Case officer:	Jack Naven
Recommendation:	Approve
Date of recommendation:	16/10/2026

Description of site, building and/or area

The John Dalton EcoLab is proposed to be located in an area of the MMU campus that is currently bounded by the John Dalton Tower to the east, John Dalton Central to the west and south and by Chester Street to the north. It can be accessed from Chester Street via the entrance to the newly completed Science & Engineering Building (John Dalton West or 'Dalton Building'.

Surrounding uses include education facilities, shops, eating and drinking establishments and bicycle storage.

The Grade II listed Dalton Statue in Forecourt of Dalton College is situated in front of the building.

Description of development

The proposal seeks Planning Permission for the installation of roof mounted plant.

The roof mounted plant will incorporate heat recovery, ventilation and integral heat pump heating and cooling in order adequatley service the needs of the 'BiG' EcoLab within the John Dalton Building at MMU.

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.

Environmental Health – Accepted the findings of the submitted acoustic report. Recommended that a condition be attached to ensure that a verification report is submitted to ensure that the development complies with the findings of this report.

Highway Services – Recommended that various informatives be added to the decision. Recommended that a Construction Management Plan be attached, but this has not been deemed appropriate by the Local Planning Authority.

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-S6 - Clean Air Policy
- JP-S7 - Resource Efficiency
- Policy JP-G9 - A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Policy JP-J1 – Supporting Long-Term Economic Growth
- Policy JP-P1 - Sustainable Places
- Policy JP-P2 – Heritage
- Policy JP-P5 – Education Skills and Knowledge

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 CC9 - Design and Heritage
- Policy EN1 - Design principles and strategic character areas
- Policy EN3 - Heritage
- Policy EN16 - Air Quality
- Policy DM1 - Development Management

Saved **Unitary Development Plan for Manchester (1995)** - The following saved UDP Policies are of relevance to this application:

- Saved policy DC19 - Listed Buildings
- Saved policy DC26 - Development and Noise

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2026)

- Chapter 14 – Achieving well-designed places
    - Policy DP3: Key principles for well-designed places
    - Policy DP4: The design process

- Chapter 20 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
    - Policy HE4: Securing the conservation of heritage assets
    - Policy HE5: Assessing effects on heritage assets
    - Policy HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets
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Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Assessment

Principle of Development

This upgraded roof-mounted kit is required to address the shortfalls of the existing heating and cooling units with the space reportedly becoming too warm during summer and too cold during winter. It will also ensure the clients requirement of maintaining the space at approximately 21 degrees C (+/- 2) throughout the year and allowing additional experimental kit to be incorporated into the room.

Visual Amenity

The proposed kit comprises of 2 main elements. A main air handling unit (Geniox 20) mounted on a galvanised steel support frame and 4 no external condenser units (Mini Air Evo) in a compact group arrangement. Supporting ductwork connects to the main air handling unit and feeds into the BiG Lab via the existing roof lights

The Geniox 20 main air handling unit is approx. 4.7m long x 2.1m wide x 2.3m high whilst the external condensor units are approx. 1m long x 0.4m wide by 0.86m high each. The main Geniox 20 air handling unit comes in a corrosion resistant casing complete with access doors to provide a clean looking rectilinear box aesthetic.

Whilst there will be an increase in the amount of infrastructure on the roof, this will be set back from the parapet edge. The smaller roof mounted plant will be situated closer to the edge, but still set back to a degree where it will not be easily visible from the surrounding street scene.



Existing elevation

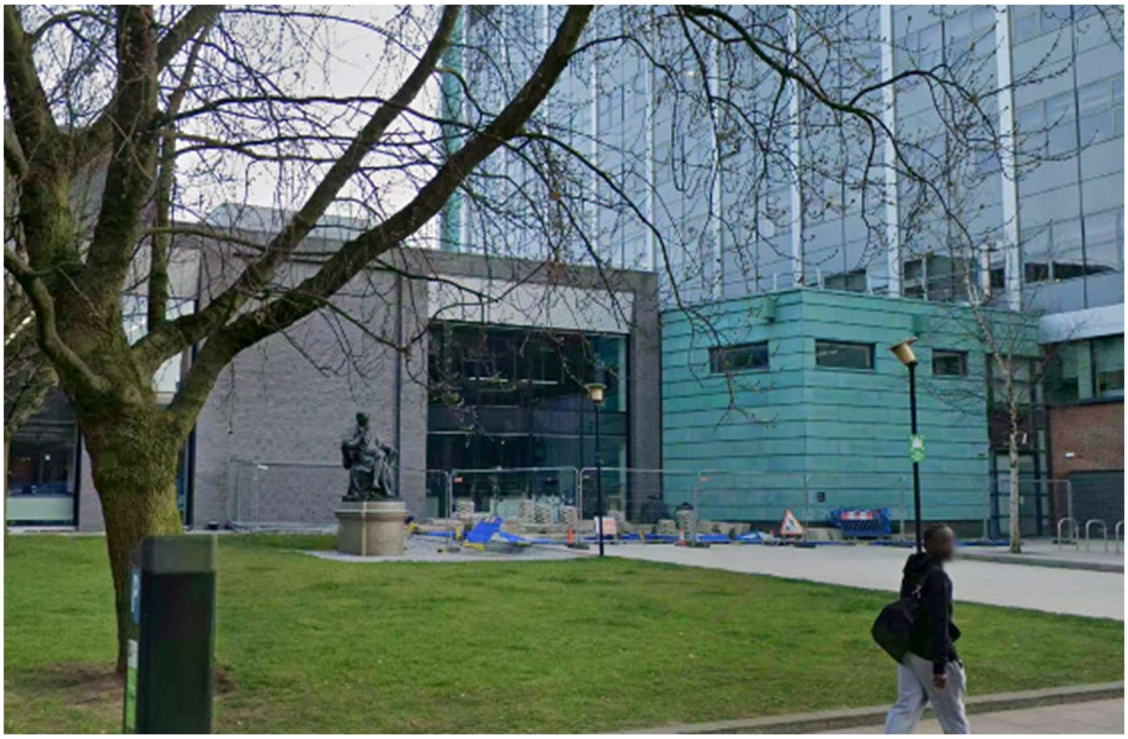
The larger roof mounted plant is set further back and this will mitigate any visual impact.

On the brick section of the building next to the proposed plant location, there is some visible mechanical infrastructure, and it is not considered that the visual impact of the proposed would be any more detrimental than the existing. Additionally, there are existing railings to the edge of the building that are more visible within the street scene.

John Dalton Tower would entirely screen all equipment from one elevation.
Trees situated in front of this section of the building will help to screen any visible elements of the plant during spring and summer months.

Heritage Impact

The Grade II listed Dalton Statue in Forecourt of Dalton College is situated to the front of this elevation of the John Dalton Building and so the impacts of the development must be considered in relation to this.



The statue is situated to the north-east of the area in question, the proposed plant would not be readily visible from most views in which the statue in appreciated, particularly when stood up close to the statue.

Overall, it is considered that there would be no harm caused to the Grade II listed statue.

Noise Impacts

MCC Environmental Health have reviewed the application and accepted the findings of the submitted noise assessment.

This noise assessment will be controlled via condition, and the submission of a verification report has been conditioned to ensure there would not be an unacceptable noise impact. Subject to a condition to this effect, the proposal would be acceptable with respect to Places for Everyone JP-P1; Core Strategy Policies SP1 and DM1; as well as Saved UDP Policy DC26.

Highway Impacts

The proposed alterations to the building are all within the red-line boundary of the site, and as such, will not impinge upon the adopted highway.

Climate change and sustainability

The proposal will provide heat recovery, reducing long-term heating energy consumption.

Access

The proposed design does not affect the security or accessibility measures already in place at the John Dalton Central Building

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

The proposals would support the operations of the university building and by virtue of its recessed siting is not considered to have enough of a significant visual impact to warrant a refusal. It would be acceptable in terms of noise impacts.

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 25 August 2026:

- Location Plan 26-034-1000
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan 26-034-2010
- Proposed Roof Plan 26-034-2011
- Proposed North Elevation 26-034-2012
- Proposed East Elevation 26-034-2013
- Proposed Section 26-034-2014
- Proposed Axonometric 26-034-2015
- Proposed Mechanical Plant Installation Noise Impact Assessment R2515-REP01-JW dated 29 July 2026

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) The roof mounted planted scheme hereby approved shall operate in accordance with the approved acoustic scheme 'Proposed Mechanical Plant Installation Noise Impact Assessment R2515-REP01-JW', dated 29 July 2026.

b) Prior to the first operation of the roof mounted plant hereby approved, a verification report, which will include post-completion testing, shall be submitted to and be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to validate that the approved roof mounted plant achieves a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level 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 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 operation of the roof mounted plant hereby approved 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.

Informatives

1) 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

2) 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

3) 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.