Manchester City Women's First Team Facility

550 Ashton New Road, Manchester

BNG Verification Visit

19th January 2026

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Kingdom Ecology Ltd has undertaken a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) verification site visit at Manchester City Women's First Team Facility, 550 Ashton New Road, Manchester, M11 4AA. The site visit was undertaken on 15th January 2026 by Richard Roe (BSc, MSc, MCIEEM, CEnv).

The development comprises the erection of a two-storey side extension to the former bank building to form a training facility, with associated earthworks, landscaping, boundary treatments, parking and access arrangements.

Richard Roe has extensive experience of undertaking habitat and protected species surveys as a professional ecological consultant with over twenty-five years' experience. Richard holds a Level 4 Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC).

1.2 Planning Condition

This verification report has been prepared to address Condition 35 of Planning Permission 138987/FO/2024. The condition states:

> *(a) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain report received by the City Council, as Local Planning Authority, on the 11 January 2024.*
>
> *(b) Prior to the first use of the development agreed within part (a) of this condition, a verification report for that development will be required to validate that the works undertaken at that stage conforms to the recommendations and required approved within part of part (b) of this planning condition.*
>
> *(c) In instances of non-conformity, these shall be detailed along with mitigation measures required to ensure compliance with the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment.*

1.3 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to verify that the landscaping works undertaken at the site conform to the requirements of the approved Biodiversity Net Gain assessment. The report provides an assessment of the habitats created and identifies any areas of non-conformity together with recommendations for remedial measures where required.

2 Survey Methods

An ecological walkover survey was undertaken on 15th January 2026. The survey aimed to verify that the landscaping arrangements proposed within the Biodiversity Net Gain assessment have been implemented in accordance with the approved plans.

The survey examined all areas of habitat creation and enhancement identified within the BNG assessment, including tree planting, hedgerow establishment, grassland creation and other landscape features. The condition and establishment of planted specimens was assessed, and the species composition of created grassland habitats was recorded where identifiable.

It should be noted that the survey was undertaken in January, which is not an optimal time for botanical assessment as many plant species will have died back and may not be evident. However, sufficient information was gathered to verify the broad habitat types present and the general progress of habitat establishment.

Photographs were taken throughout the site visit and are provided in the Appendix. Habitat areas correspond to those identified within the approved BNG assessment plan (Figure 1).

3 Verification Findings

3.1 Summary of Changes

The landscaping plan has been slightly amended since the completion of the original BNG assessment. The BNG assessment was previously based upon a total of 187 trees; however, the latest planting proposals provide 163 trees. In addition, the new layout results in the retention of 16 trees at the site (comprising four medium-sized trees and 12 small trees). The additional retained trees are all located within Area 1. Previously, the development was proposed to retain two small trees and four medium trees only.

Nevertheless, even with the reduction in numbers of trees planted, the increased retention of existing trees means that the proposed development now delivers an improved biodiversity net gain compared to the original BNG assessment (increasing from 79.16% to 84.53% for habitat units), and continues to substantially exceed the 10% net gain requirement.

Tree planting and the majority of landscaping works were completed during summer 2025. Construction works are still ongoing, with landscaping proposed for completion when the construction compound is removed from site. It is understood that the final landscaping will be completed in February 2026.

3.2 Site Visit Results

Photographs were taken throughout the site visit and are provided in the Appendix. Habitat areas correspond to those identified within the approved BNG assessment plan (Figure 1).

3.2.1 Area 1: Land North of Car Park

Tree planting and grassland reseeding has been undertaken in this area. Planted trees comprise well-established standard specimens. Trees recommended for retention remain in place as specified within the BNG assessment.

Grassland reseeding has been completed; however, it is not possible to fully assess grassland composition until the grasses have established and herbs are more evident. Nevertheless, the grassland appears to comprise areas of modified grassland with perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), alongside areas of more species-rich neutral grassland. Species recorded within the neutral grassland areas include Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), tufted hair-grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), false oat-

grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*) and cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*). Common herbs present include yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.), ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) and ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*).

Planted tree species include pine (*Pinus* sp.), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), birch (*Betula* sp.), alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) and field maple (*Acer campestre*). Patches of neutral grassland may be residual from the site prior to development as they appear well-established.

Works in this area are not quite complete as the site compound is currently located here. When works are finalised, the compound will be removed and landscaping works will be continued with additional tree planting proposed in this area.

3.2.2 Area 2: Land to West of New Facility

Works to landscape and re-profile land in this area have been completed. This includes privet hedging around the boundary fence, topsoil mounding and reseeding, and the planting of trees and hedgerows over soil mounds.

Assessment of the grassland sward will need to follow on; however, the sward appears to comprise a mix of narrow and coarse grasses along with some wildflower species including wild carrot (*Daucus carota*), dove's-foot crane's-bill (*Geranium molle*) and common chickweed (*Stellaria media*).

A mixed native hedgerow has been planted comprising hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), hazel, field maple and willow (*Salix* sp.). Planted trees include similar species to those previously recorded in Area 1.

3.2.3 Area 3: Southern Boundary

This area has been reseeded and planted with trees. A native hedgerow has been planted alongside the footpath. Tree species include a mix of pine with native specimens as previously recorded.

An area of landscaping has not been completed near the south-east corner of this part of the site. This area is to be reseeded with amenity grassland.

3.2.4 Area 4: Eastern Boundary and Canal Side

This part of the site has been re-profiled and reseeded. The grassland is too early in its establishment to determine species composition in

detail. However, some species present within the grassland include wild carrot, common chickweed and mustard (*Sinapis* sp.).

A length of privet hedge has been installed along the fence adjacent to the canal, and this also extends into the site itself. Tree planting has been provided on the top of the embankment. Two bee poles have been installed in this area.

Cut wood from the cleared areas of pine trees has been stockpiled and will be used to create habitat piles. Some additional grass seeding is required to complete this area, either side of the tarmac walkway.

3.2.5 Area 5: Retained Habitat Area

This is an area of land which has been retained with established trees and rough grassland. The area has been used for storage of cut logs. Habitat piles will be created within this area using the stored timber.

3.2.6 Other Features

Bat and bird boxes are still to be installed on the exterior of the converted building. This should be completed prior to the first use of the development.

4 Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation

Based upon the revised landscaping proposals with 163 trees (reduced from the original 187 trees) and the retention of 16 existing trees (increased from 6 trees), the development will result in a net gain of 2.48 habitat units, representing an **84.53% biodiversity net gain**. The development also achieves a net gain of 0.22 hedgerow units, representing a 27.95% net gain in hedgerow units. The development now delivers an improved biodiversity net gain compared to the original BNG assessment (increasing from 79.16% to 84.53% for habitat units)

This significantly exceeds the mandatory 10% net gain requirement introduced under the Environment Act 2021.

Summary of Biodiversity Net Gain:

Parameter	Value
Baseline habitat units	2.93 units
Post-intervention habitat units	5.41 units
Net change in habitat units	2.48 units
Percentage habitat unit net gain	**84.53%**
Minimum requirement	10%
Trading rules satisfied	Yes

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary of Compliance

The verification site visit has confirmed that the majority of landscaping works proposed within the BNG assessment have been implemented. Tree planting, hedgerow establishment and grassland creation have been undertaken across the site in general accordance with the approved landscaping proposals.

Although the total number of trees has been reduced from 187 to 145, the development still achieves a significant biodiversity net gain of 61.32%, which substantially exceeds the mandatory 10% requirement.

5.2 Outstanding Works

The following items remain outstanding and should be completed prior to the first use of the development:

- Removal of site compound and completion of landscaping works in Area 1 (northern boundary), including additional tree planting.
- Completion of grass seeding in Area 3 (south-east corner) with amenity grassland.
- Completion of grass seeding in Area 4 either side of the tarmac walkway.
- Creation of habitat piles in Areas 4 and 5 using stockpiled timber.
- Installation of bat and bird boxes on the exterior of the converted building.

5.3 Further Monitoring

A further update survey will be required when landscaping has been finalised (anticipated February 2026). This will confirm completion of all outstanding works and provide verification that the site achieves compliance with the approved BNG assessment. It is recommended that update site visits are completed between May and September when grassland habitats can be more suitably assessed.

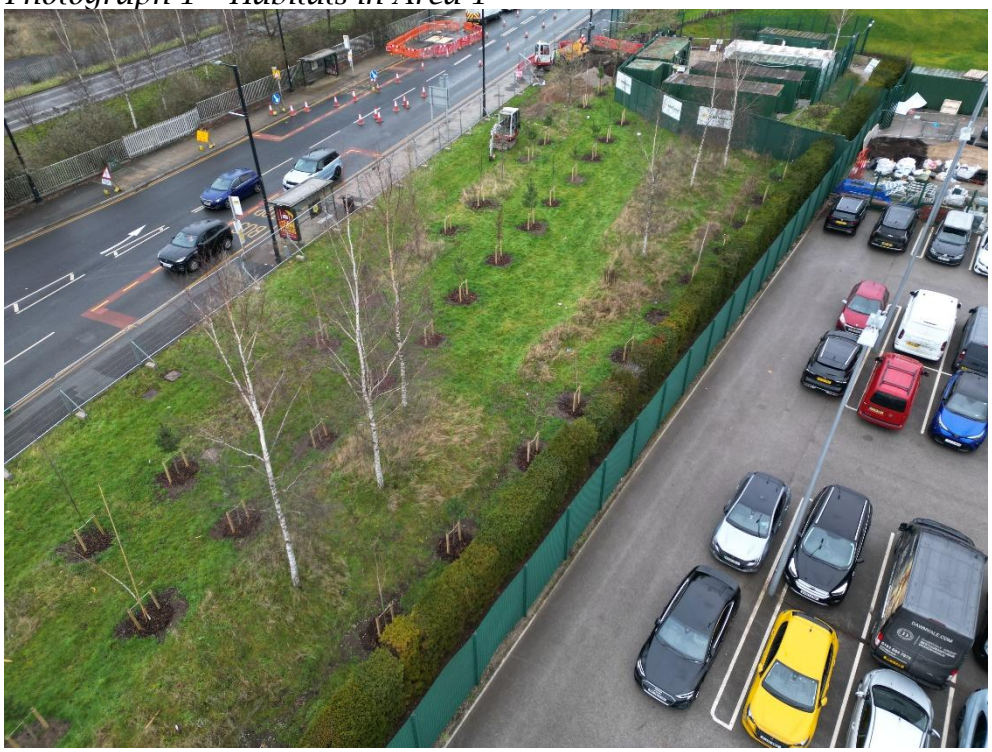
Further checks of grassland areas will be required to monitor species composition, confirm that appropriate habitat management is being undertaken, and to verify habitat condition scores of grasslands under ongoing management.

It may take two years or more for the grassland to reach target condition and relative habitat type, as there is often an initial flush of weeds and other undesirable species following first sowing.

In accordance with the planning condition requirements, any dead or defective planting within five years of the date of planting must be replaced with specimens of similar size and species.

6 Appendix

Photograph 1 – Habitats in Area 1



Photograph 2 – Habitats in Area 2



Photograph 3 – Habitats in Area 2



Photograph 4 – Habitats in Area 3



Photograph 5 – Habitats in Area 4



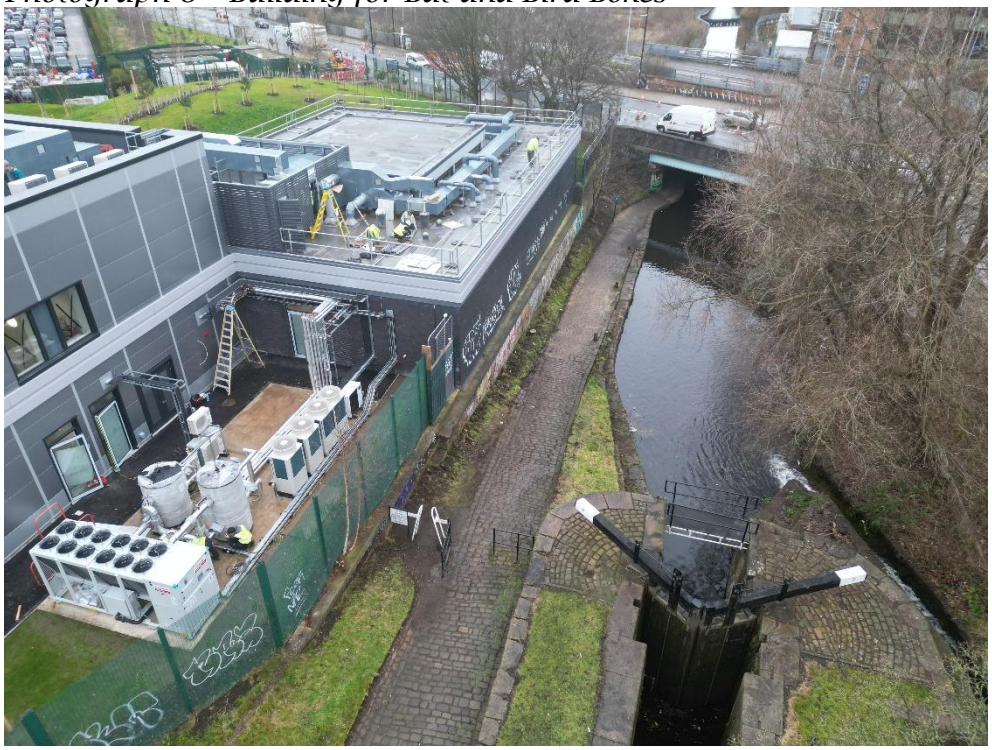
Photograph 6 – Habitats in Area 4



Photograph 7 – Habitats in Area 5



Photograph 8 – Building for Bat and Bird Boxes



Photograph 9 – Aerial View of Site (East side)



Photograph 10 – Aerial View of Site (West side)

