Outlook

144791/FO/2025

From [redacted]
Date Tue 13/01/2026 10:16
To Jennifer Atkinson [redacted]

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Hi Jennifer,

Thank you for sending additional information for this application at Weston Student Halls And Pendulum Hotel, 78 Sackville Street, Manchester (144791/FO/2025).

The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Bat Scoping Survey, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Statement, statutory BNG metric (Phase 1, Phase 2 and whole site), all authored by UES Ltd (December 2025). An Environmental Statement has also been provided (Turley, December 2025). Based on the submitted information, I have the following comments:

Ecological Appraisal
The PEA report appears to provide robust ecological assessments and I have no reason to doubt the findings. I have some comments which should be addressed as below:

- The report recommends bat boxes to be affixed to trees at 5-6m high, however given that there appears to be no existing trees on-site and the new trees are likely to be very small, this doesn't seem feasible on-site.
- Additionally, bat boxes are recommended to be installed just below the eaves/roof height of the buildings, however given that it is mainly tall tower blocks proposed (50 storeys and 33 storeys), this also doesn't seem feasible on-site.
- Bird boxes have been proposed at a minimum height of 3m which again doesn't seem feasible with the newly planted trees or buildings.

As per the above, suitable and realistic options should be provided to host enhancements such as bat and bird boxes, based on the proposed plans.

All mitigation and enhancements recommendations in the report should be followed (section 4) and secured by condition which includes provision of a Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) method statement for the removal of Virginia creeper, a sensitive lighting scheme for bats (e.g. Artificial Lighting Guidance - Buildings, planning and development - Bat Conservation Trust) and nesting bird checks (example condition wording below).

As all wild birds, their nest and eggs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), we would recommend that the following condition be attached to any permission, should it be granted:

No removal of or works to any trees or hedgerows shall take place during the main bird breeding season 1st March and 31st August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation for active birds' nests immediately before clearance and ensured that no birds will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site.

Bats

As per the bat report, the buildings on-site were assessed as having 'low' potential for roosting bats following external and internal inspections. All features were fully inspected, and no evidence of bats was found, and I have no reason to doubt the findings. No further surveys or licencing are required prior to the buildings being demolished. Enhancements including bat boxes and a sensitive lighting scheme are to be implemented (as above).

Environmental Statement

As per my comments for the EIA scoping opinion (EIASCO/25/009) at this site, there are limited ecological constraints on this site, and the ecological aspects can be dealt with through provision of an Ecological Appraisal as opposed to EIA (which has been provided). Therefore, I agree with the ES that Biodiversity can be scoped out.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

I have the following comments regarding the BNG assessment which should be addressed:

- The BNG report states that the post-development information has been inputted using the Planit Ltd in August 2025 (Drawing number 3489-PLA-XX-XX-DR-L-2000; S3;P05). However, it appears that the most recent General Arrangement Plan is revision P07. It should be checked that the BNG matches to the latest landscape plans for accuracy.
- The General Arrangement Plan (GAP) doesn't appear to have a key to identify the proposed habitats, the BNG metric provides some information however I am struggling to work out which habitat is which, particularly for the introduced shrubs and grassland. It also appears that there are more than 81 trees (small sized, moderate condition) and 13 trees (small sized, poor condition) shown in the GAP (Rev P07) and therefore the BNG should be updated to reflect the proposals.

Summary

In summary, insufficient information has currently been provided for this application regarding the provision of bat and bird boxes and minor amendments are required to the BNG assessment to match the latest proposed plans. This further information is required prior to determination of the application.

If you have queries relating to this advice, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

[redacted]
Ecologist

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Greater Manchester Ecology Unit

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