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- Protected species survey & licensing
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- Management plans

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Client: Northern Design (Oldham) Ltd

Date: 11th March 2025

Dear Alan Davies,

Re: 24/01273/FUL - BNG Assessment: Land off Manchester Road, Rochdale, OL11 4HY

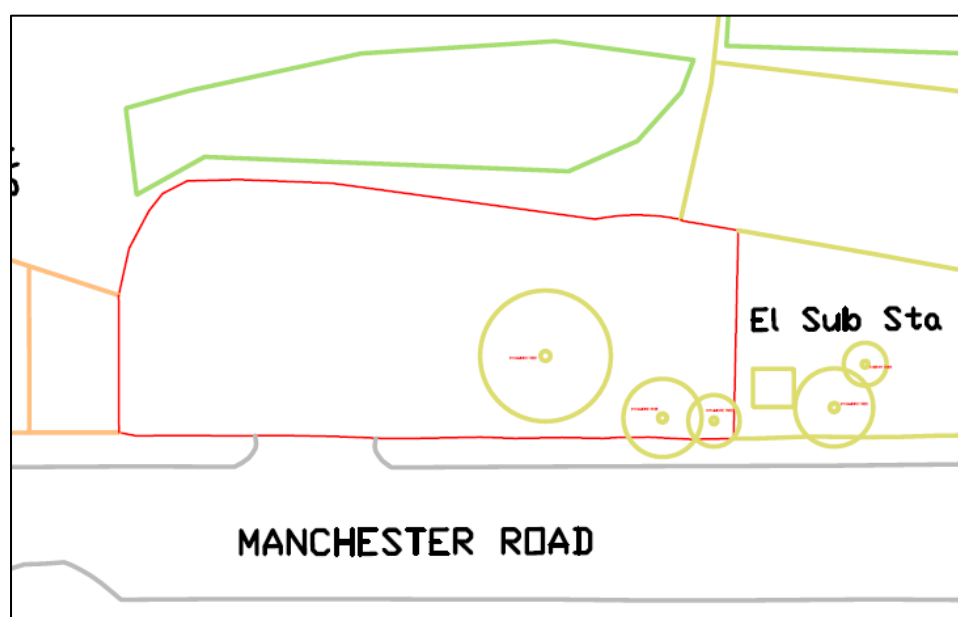
PENNINE ecological have been commissioned to assesses the site in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and provide a reasoned statement as to why this site is exempt from BNG.

Following the submission of a planning application at the site (reference: 24/01273/FUL), a consultation response from GMEU was received. The consultation recommended “*that prior to determination a biodiversity net gain assessment is provided that either demonstrates it is exempt under the de minimis rule or provides evidence on how 10% net gain could be achieved*”.

This report intends to address the recommendation by providing an assessment of the site and reviewing the BNG requirements of the site.

The site was visited in 24th February 2025 to obtain photographs and assess habitats. The site area subject to survey is shown below;

Location Plan and Aerial image (06/2023) of Proposal Site





Site Baseline

The site is an area of u1c artificial unvegetated; unsealed surfaces which is not in current use. Sporadic areas of ephemeral / ruderal herb are growing through the artificial substrate, however the total area of vegetative cover is <10% and therefore categorised within the u1c habitat (refer to UKHabs, 2023 definition below). There is one early mature sycamore and two young sycamore trees within the site, but these will be retained and are unaffected by the proposals.

Figure 1: UKHabs, 2023 definition



Code and Name

u1c Artificial unvegetated – unsealed surface

Category Type

Primary Level 4

Spatial Feature Type

Area Line Point

Definition

Land that has no or very low (<10%) cover of vegetation through direct or indirect human activity, and the soil surface is not sealed with impervious materials.

Inclusions

Unsealed surfaces with vegetation cover <10%.

Tracks (see 839) that are mappable as area features with vegetation cover <10%.

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Photographs of the site are provided below.



Photograph 1: Overview of the site with u1c artificial substrate. There is localised bent grasses growing through the substrate, but this equates to <10% coverage.



Photograph 2: Overview of the site with u1c artificial substrate. There is localised bent grasses growing through the substrate, but this equates to <10% coverage.



Photograph 3: Overview of the site with u1c artificial substrate. There is localised bent grasses growing through the substrate, but this equates to <10% coverage.

Recommendations: Biodiversity Net Gain

As per the exemptions set out in 'paragraph 17 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990' and the 'Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024', the application would be exempt on the following grounds:

- **Development subject to the de minimis exemption.** Development that does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than 25 square metres (e.g. 5m by 5m) of onsite habitat, or 5 metres of linear habitats such as hedgerows

For clarity, areas of more established ruderal / ephemeral which are shown on historic street view imagery have been removed from site. This was completed as part of the granted planning permission at the site (reference: 24/00151/FUL). As such, this is not considered to be habitat degradation and no further BNG assessment is required.

There are no further surveys or assessments required in relation to BNG.

If you require clarification on any issue, please contact me at the above address.

Yours faithfully

Patrick Leatham

Patrick Leatham BSc (Hons), MCIEEM