

Thank you for consulting the GMEU.

Summary

It appears unlikely that there will be any ecological issues associated with this development, though clarifications on the extent of the development is recommended.

Wildlife

The development appears to be restricted to a temporary staircase and bridge linking existing pathways on the Bury College side of the metrolink to the platform. It is therefore very unlikely that there will be any wildlife issues. However, the plans provided included a new bridge from Union Square, which I assume are for information as they fall outside the red edge and the bridge is not included in the description. The bridge will however cross existing ornamental planting potential bird nesting habitat and likely result in disturbance. If this is part of the application then a standard bird nesting condition will be required.

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment & Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Section 187 of the NPPF 2024 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. 10% BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

If the development is restricted to the staircase, I am satisfied that no mitigation is likely required and that the development is likely exempt from mandatory BNG under the de minimis rule assuming all trees currently present north of Angouleme Way are retained. If any of the mature trees currently present are to be removed then the development would not be exempt under the de minimis rule as the root protection area of the tree is included in the baseline value area for the site.

Planning and Transportation
Place