

Updated GMEU response

The nocturnal bat surveys were undertaken in line with best practice guidelines, and no bats were observed roosting within the building. No further surveys or a Natural England mitigation licence are required. However, as bats are highly mobile creatures, we would advise that the following informative be attached to any permission, should it be granted:

Whilst the works have been assessed as low risk for bats, the applicant is reminded that under the Habitat Regulation it is an offence to disturb, harm or kill bats. If a bat is found all work should cease immediately and a suitably licensed bat worker employed to assess how best to safeguard the bat(s). Natural England should also be informed.

As per the Inspection & Assessment in relation to Bats & Breeding Birds, any new external lighting must be designed in line with best practice guidelines (e.g. <https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting>) to ensure that the surrounding treelines remain un-lit and impacts on foraging, commuting, and potentially roosting bats will be avoided.

We would also make the following recommendations:

- Protected species can turn up in unexpected places and the granting of planning permission does not negate the need to abide by the laws which are in place to safeguard biodiversity. An informative should be used so that the applicant is aware that they must seek ecological advice should they find or suspect that the proposals will impact on protected species.
- Work that will impact on habitats where nesting birds may be present (for example external works to the building or the removal of vegetation), should not be undertaken in the main bird nesting season (March – August) unless suitable checks for active bird nests have been undertaken.
- Planning policy encourages enhancements and net gains for biodiversity to be delivered through the planning system. Wherever possible measures to enhance the site for biodiversity should be secured as part of this planning application, these could include those proposed within the Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (Tyrer Ecological Consultants, 2025).

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit