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- cc PS/Kord Bellwin
- PS/Mr Waldegrave
- Mr Delgou
- Mr Heiser
- Mr Edmund
- Mr Owen
- Mr McDermid
- Mr Ellis-Rees
- Mr Noye
- Mr Parker
- Mr Young
- Mr Cowley
- Tsf(AHD)

My ref:  
Your ref:

31 May 1984

Dear Norman,

I have before me an application by Birmingham City Council for additional capital resources and special RSG and expenditure target treatment for the building of their proposed International Convention Centre. The application was made by the council before the local elections but the Centre has been billed as a bipartisan project and I have no reason to believe that the new council will not wish to go ahead with it.

Our officials have been in touch on this matter. I understand that there is general agreement that a market exists for additional conference facilities in the UK but that Birmingham is not necessarily the ideal location; that chimes with the views expressed by the English Tourist Board. The assessment here, based on a detailed appraisal by a member of my Urban Development Grant appraisal team working closely with officers of the Council, is that although the scheme may be desirable from Birmingham's own viewpoint, the national advantages are much more questionable.

I therefore intend to decline to commit to this project an additional allocation which, on the best estimate available at present, would account for some 3½% per year of the total resources available nationally for the Other Services block. Neither can I see my way, either technically or in policy terms, to make the concessions which are being sought on the revenue side.

I am due to meet Birmingham City Council on 7 June and this subject will undoubtedly come up. I would like to use that occasion to tell the Council how my mind is working on this issue, without absolutely shutting the door on any further representations they may want to make. Would you please let me know before then whether you would be content with that?

I am copying this for information to Peter Rees.

*Yours ever*  
*Patrick*

PATRICK JENKIN

30 MAY 1985

