

73467 – Land to west side of Bury New Road/Peel Brow, Ramsbottom

We do not regard that permission in principle should be granted as there are potential ecological reasons to object and or could prevent the development being viable.

This is because the development falls with the Irwell Valley currently protected under UDP policy EN6/4 and falling within the Greater Manchester Nature Network. The GMEU will therefore likely object on these grounds unless strong evidence is provided to justify that mitigation can be provided.

Second the site is wooded and will have potential to provide habitat for protected species such as badger and there may be mature trees on the site capable of providing bat roosting habitat and the development is in close proximity to the River Irwell, where otter are known to be present. The risks are therefore high enough that accepting permission in principle could theoretically result in an illegal permission if protected species were subsequently found on the site as part of technical details that could not be resolved via a license.

“Current guidance states it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development is established before the planning permission is granted otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision (UK Government Guidance within the ODPM Government Circular 06/2005)”

Finally, the development is woodland likely of moderate ecological value but potentially of high ecological value, which will be replaced primarily with negligible and low value habitats. There is the potential for a significant net loss at the site level that would require the purchase of a significant off-site contribution that could make the development unviable.

We do not regard permission in principle being the correct type of application for this site, owing to the potential ecological constraints that could result in an objection from the GMEU. We therefore recommend the applicant withdraw and resubmit as either an outline or full application with as a minimum a preliminary ecological appraisal.

Ecologist
GM Ecology Unit