

From: David Dutton
Sent: Wednesday, April 12, 2023 6:46 PM
To: Clapworthy, Dean <D.Clapworthy@bury.gov.uk>
Subject: Planning application 69463 Station Works

Hi Dean

Thank you for consulting the GMEU

Summary

There are unlikely to be any significant ecological issues associated with this development. I would however recommend that the developer enhances rather than land locks the boundary with the watercourse.

Protected Species

It is very unlikely that there will be any protected species issues associated with this site. Whilst otter have been recorded upstream of this site around Crow Trees Farm, these are assumed to have come overland from the River Irwell via Elton Goit and the MBB Canal. Given the number of culverts along this watercourse it is very unlikely that otter utilise this section of the stream. The watercourse is also channelled at this location. No further information or measures are required.

Nesting Birds

Trees and scattered scrub have developed on parts of the site potential bird nesting habitat. All British birds nests and eggs (with certain limited exceptions) are protected by Section 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended. I recommend a condition along the following lines be applied to any permission.

No works to trees or shrubs shall occur between the 1st March and 31st August in any year unless a detailed bird nest survey by a suitably experienced ecologist has been carried out immediately prior to clearance and written confirmation provided that no active bird nests are present which has been agreed in writing by the LPA.

Proximity to unnamed Brook

Whilst accepting that the existing wall will act as barrier to the majority of overland flow and prevent debris entering the watercourse, there is presumably a pathway via the existing Environment Agency Access gate and potential pathways via any existing surface water drains that may exist on the site. These risk can I accept be mitigated through capping of any drains and placing a temporary silt barrier across the base of the gate and any other gaps in the wall. I therefore recommend a condition along the following lines is applied to any permission.

No development, site clearance, earth moving shall take place or material or machinery brought on site until a method statement to protect the unnamed brook from accidental spillages, dust and debris has been supplied to and agreed by the LPA. Measures will include capping of any existing surface drains to the Brook and blocking of any gaps between the site and the Brook with silt fencing. All measure will be implemented and maintained for the duration of the construction period in accordance with the approved details.

There will also be risks in terms of flooding and pollution, post development if new surface water drainage is discharged direct to the Brook, given that downstream the majority of the Brook is in a culvert prior to discharging in to the River Irwell. Whilst measures to prevent these issues are feasible such as hydrobrakes and SUDs the required details are beyond my area of expertise. I recommend that in conjunction with the Environment Agency and internal drainage consultee adequate drainage measures are put in place.

Finally I do not support how the layout will restrict future access to the Brook for channel maintenance. Whilst accepting they are maintaining pedestrian access and access is also achievable off Newbridge Close, 50m upstream, the layout will cause issues in the future if major works are required to the Brook channel. It would be better to enable access along the entirety of the Brook adjacent to the site through provision of a landscaped access route, layed out as public open space, through to Newbridge Close. *I therefore recommend that prior to determination consideration is taken to redesign the layout along the watercourse.*

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Section 174 of the NPPF 2021 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. I accept that given the site is primarily hardstanding biodiversity net gain is achievable simply because of the vegetated gardens and whilst noting that the loss of early successional woodland will not occur, accept that urban tree planting if native species are utilised, (which is proposed) in this case is acceptable. However, as noted above I would prefer a landscaped strip adjacent to the watercourse. Therefore, I do not recommend conditioning of the current landscape proposal.

I also recommend mitigation/enhancement for nesting birds and bats through provision of bat and bird bricks on the new build. This detail can be conditioned.

David Dutton

Ecologist

Planning

Planning and Transportation

Place