

Thank you for consulting GMEU on this application for erection of 1 detached dwelling on land adjacent to 220 Ainsworth Road, Bury BL8 2LR.

The applicant has included information with regards to BNG, so I am assuming that the application is not exempt from statutory BNG for any reason (self-build for example). A small sites metric has been filled in.

There are a couple of errors in this which we would advise need to be rectified.

Firstly, the baseline habitat there doesn't appear to have included the existing tree that is on the site along the northern boundary. Secondly the post development habitats has included new proposed hedgerow on the site. Whilst this is welcome from a general biodiversity perspective, it should not be included in the BNG metric as it cannot be secured for 30 years. Only retained habitats and vegetated gardens should be recorded post development within gardens.

Off-site units will need to be purchased to ensure a 10% net gain is provided, which will need to be evidenced when the Biodiversity Gain Condition is discharged, should the application receive planning permission.

The structures on the site appear to be low risk for protected species such as roosting bats, however the buildings and vegetation on the site could support nesting birds.

I would therefore advise a condition is used to secure reasonable avoidance measures to be adopted during demolition of the buildings (such as hand removal of the tiles), and an informative is used so the applicant is aware that 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. The applicant should be 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 vegetation removal and demolition of structures), should not be undertaken in the main bird nesting season (March – August) unless suitable checks for active bird nests have been undertaken.

If you have any queries about these comments, please let me know.