

72225 – 104 Nelson Street, Bury

Thank you for consulting GMEU on this application at 104 Nelson Street, Bury (72225) for the reinstatement of a mid-terrace house following a gas explosion collapse.

No ecological or Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) documents appear to have been submitted as part of the application.

From a review of the photographs satellite imagery, there appears to be one tree present onsite in the former rear garden of the property and the remaining site appears to be hardstanding with very sparse areas of ruderal/ephemeral vegetation beginning to grow through. The site is of relatively low ecological value, however the tree may provide nesting opportunities for birds. It is not overly clear whether the tree is to be retained or removed as part of the proposals. If the tree is to be removed, I have the following recommendation:

- Work that will impact on habitats where nesting birds may be present (for example tree removal), should not be undertaken in the main bird nesting season (March – August) unless suitable checks for active bird nests have been undertaken. We would suggest that a condition to this effect be placed on any permission.

There is thought to be very limited other ecological constraints on the site and therefore an ecological assessment would not be required.

If the tree is to be retained, then the proposal would be exempt from a BNG assessment under the de minimis rule (less than 25m² of habitat removal). If the tree is to be lost then the de minimis exemption cannot be claimed as even a small tree (>7.5cm dbh) has an estimated area habitat of 41m² associated with the root protection zone and canopy.

Section 15 (paragraph 187) of the NPPF 2024 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Wherever possible measures to enhance the site for biodiversity should be secured as part of this planning application and could include integration of a bird box onto the west facing aspect of the dwelling or existing tree (if to be retained), along with planting of native shrubs/plants in the garden.

In summary, it should be confirmed whether the existing tree is to be retained or removed as part of the proposals which will determine whether a BNG assessment is required.

Ecologist

GM Ecology Unit