

69580 – Land & Buildings at Murray Road/2 – 10 Princess Parade/47 – 51 Market Street & Bury Market, Bury

Thank you for consulting the GMEU

Summary

Potential issues relating to bats, nesting birds and biodiversity mitigation and enhancement can be dealt with via condition and or informative.

Bats

Bat surveys have not been provided but were for the prior approval for the demolition of the buildings. No bats were found. This bat survey was carried out in May 2022 such surveys valid for between one and two years. Given only very low levels of bat activity were recorded I am happy for this survey to remain valid until the next bat activity season. I therefore recommend a condition along the following lines is applied to any permission.

If the demolitions hereby approved does not commence before 30th April 20224, the building will be reassessed for bat roosting potential and the finding supplied to and agreed in writing by the LPA.

Nesting Birds

Feral pigeon and pied wagtail were suspected of nesting across the site in 2022. All British birds nests and eggs (with certain limited exceptions) are protected by Section 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended.

It should be noted that pigeons are capable of breeding throughout the year and whilst protected on the nest like any birds, they are also listed as a pest species and a 'general license' can be applied for from Natural England to allow work to proceed that would damage pigeon's nests, if present. I therefore recommend a condition along the following lines be applied to any permission.

No demolition shall occur unless a detailed bird nest survey by a suitably experienced ecologist has been carried out immediately demolition and written confirmation provided that no active bird nests are present which has been agreed in writing by the LPA unless the species present is feral pigeon in which case a general license issued by Natural England authorising destruction of feral nests should be provided to the LPA.

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. The existing site is primarily hardstanding with a few young mature trees to the north and south and a small area of amenity grassland. The trees to the south will be lost, with 3 of the 4 trees to the north retained. The five trees lost will be replaced with around 20 small and medium sized trees, with an increase overall of vegetated land. I am therefore satisfied that mitigation and enhancement will be

achieved in terms of vegetated habitats, which can be maximised by the inclusion of some native tree species within the planting mix. In terms of wildlife, the only mitigation would appear to be for loss of bird nesting habitat. I therefore recommend provision of measures suitable to pied flycatcher and other species are included within the development. E.g. a bird box on the retained trees. *The biodiversity mitigation and enhancement details can be conditioned.*

Ecologist

GM Ecology Unit