

70222 – Former Mondi Mill, Bridge Street, Ramsbottom

I take on board the measures to control invasive species but would note that reinfestation will occur each year from upstream and to achieve good condition less than 5% of the grassland should include undesirable species. This includes more than Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed with the BNG metric extending to species such as creeping buttercup, docks and thistles. Whilst achievable this will be an expensive on-going requirement.

With regards the LEMP, whilst accepting this is a reasonable document, it will require significant revision due to the proposed target conditions to reflect the condition assessment criteria, which were not known at the time this document was written.

Therefore, if the developers is determined to achieve good condition despite the likely expense, they need to address all the condition criteria within the LEMP which include.:

- The grassland is a good representation of its Habitat (UKHAB) Type. (ie what is the target habitat)
- Varied sward height (how will they ensure 20% kept below 7cm and 20% long. This requires variable mowing regimes which are proposed.
- Cover of bare ground lies between 1 and 5%. This may require deliberate creation of scrapes.
- Cover of bracken less than 20% and scrub 5%. This one should be relatively easy to achieve.
- Combined evidence of undesirable species and physical damage less than 5% (for this site the risks include recreational damage and damage due to river erosion). This is the most high risk due to the presence of the river, invasive species and recreational pressure.
- 10 or more vascular plant species per m². This may be difficult to achieve dependent on the nutrient levels present.

To achieve good condition 5 or 6 of the above have to be met.

As noted, it would be more realistic to target moderate or fairly good condition.

Ecologist

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