

67802 – Hardy's Gate Bridge, Dumers Lane, Radcliffe

Thank you for consulting the GMEU

Summary

The developer's ecological consultant identified no significant ecological issues. Issues relating to bats, nesting birds, proximity to the River Irwell and biodiversity enhancement measures can be resolved via condition and or informative.

Bats

A valid bat report has been provided, no evidence of bats was recorded but owing to difficulties in carrying out the survey, reasonable avoidance measures have been recommended. Given the disturbance is limited to vibrations during construction on an existing road bridge, subject to heavy traffic, I am satisfied that these are adequate. *The recommendations in section 4.2 of the report should be conditioned.*

Nesting Birds

A bird was nesting under the bridge. No direct disturbance is likely though indirect disturbance due to noise and vibration is theoretically possible. Given however the recommendations of the bat report are for the works to occur during the winter, the risk of disturbance is unlikely. I recommend however as a precaution a condition along the following lines.

No works shall occur between the 1st March and 31st August unless a reasonable avoidance measures method statement for birds that nest in the arches be provided to and agreed in writing by the LPA

Proximity to the River Irwell

There are risks during construction of dust, pollutants and debris entering the watercourse and negatively impacting on the ecological potential of the river. I am however satisfied given the nature of the works that the risk are low compared to previous works in this locality and can be dealt with via a condition along the following lines

No development shall take place or material or machinery brought on site until a method statement to protect the River Irwell from accidental spillages, dust and debris has been supplied to and agreed by the LPA. All measure will be implemented and maintained for the duration of the construction period in accordance with the approved details.

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. There will be no loss of vegetated habitats and no permanent impacts to wildlife with potential temporary disturbance limited to bats and nesting birds. I am satisfied that no mitigation is required. The consultant notes that enhancement in the form of a bat box could be provided. Equally, provision for nesting birds can be provided. *The details can be provided via condition.*

Ecologist

GM Ecology Unit