

Thank you for consulting the GMEU

Summary

Potential ecological issues include nesting birds and mitigation for loss of 2 or 3 native trees

Protected Species

There are unlikely to be any protected species issues associated with this site. The trees to be removed are young mature and from streetview appear healthy with negligible bat roosting potential. No other species are likely to be present within the a zone of influence of the proposal. No further information or measures are required.

Nesting Birds

Two or three trees are proposed for removal. Potential bird nesting habitat. All British birds nests and eggs (with certain limited exceptions) are protected by Section 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended. I recommend a condition along the following lines be applied to any permission.

No works to trees shall occur between the 1st March and 31st August in any year unless a detailed bird nest survey by a suitably experienced ecologist has been carried out immediately prior to clearance and written confirmation provided that no active bird nests are present which has been agreed in writing by 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 development will result in the loss of a small area of low ecological value grassland and up to three native trees. Wildlife issues appear restricted to the loss of potential bird nesting habitat. I recommend that as part of any permission full mitigation for loss of native trees is provided ie replacement native tree planting such as silver birch, rowan, hawthorn or holly. I would not recommend ash be replanted due to the current problems with ash die-back. Mitigation for loss of grassland could be provided through planting of a native hedge along the front or rear boundaries. Eg beech, hornbeam, holly or hawthorn. I recommend on bird box is provided for loss of potential nesting habitat. This could be attached to the proposed new buildings or the retained tree. *The details can be conditioned.*

Ecologist