

From: David Dutton <tameside.gov.uk>
Sent: 03 October 2024 10:46
To: Booth, Claire <bury.gov.uk>
Subject: Planning application 70870 33 Sunny Bower St

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Hi Claire

Thank you for consulting the GMEU

Summary

Potential ecological issues include bats and nesting birds.

Bats

An initial assessment by Angela Graham found the building to be moderate risk. Two dusk surveys were recommended ideally spread across the entire survey season, i.e. one in the first half and one in the second half of the season. Two dusk surveys were provided both in August, over 3 weeks apart by Gritstone Ecology. No evidence of bats emerging was recorded. I have no reason to doubt the findings or recommendations of either report.

On balance I am satisfied that it is very unlikely that the conservation status of bats will be negatively effected by this development as whilst best practice is for dusk surveys to be as far apart as possible, the surveys provided were within what is usually regarded as acceptable. Given no actual evidence of bats was found during the assessment, I see no reason not to accept that adequate survey has now occurred.

However given I also accept that the Tottington area is known to be hot spot for bats and that two surveys in August are not as definitive as one in June and one in August, I recommend precautionary working measures during development. This can be conditioned along the following lines.

Prior to any external building works or works in the roof space a precautionary working measures method statement for bats will be provided to and agreed in writing by the LPA. Should work not commence prior to April 2026 an updated bat assessment should be provided.

Nesting Birds

No reference is made to evidence of nesting birds, though Angela Graham notes that the assessment included nesting birds. I therefore assume they are absent. As a precaution I recommend an informative along the following lines is applied to any permission.

The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended it is an offence to remove, damage, or destroy the nest of a wild bird, while the nest is in use or being built. Planning consent does not provide a defence against prosecution under this act. If a birds nest is suspected work should cease immediately and a suitably experienced ecologist employed to assess how best to safeguard the nest(s).

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment & Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Section 180 of the NPPF 2023 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. 10% BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

The development is restricted to the conversion of the barn. No vegetated habitats are lost. I therefore accept that the development is exempt with regards to biodiversity net gain under the de minimis exemption.

No wildlife appears to be adversely effected. As enhancement I recommend provision of one bat roosting feature eg bat box or integrated bat tube, brick etc. The details can be provided via condition.

David Dutton

Ecologist

Planning

Investment, Development and Housing

Place

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