

From: David Dutton <david.dutton@tameside.gov.uk>
Sent: 01 November 2022 11:11
To: Clapworthy, Dean <D.Clapworthy@bury.gov.uk>
Subject: Planning application 68884 Ferngrove

Hi Dean

Thank you for consulting the GMEU

Summary

Previous recommendation still largely apply, though the ecological report is now becoming dated.

Ecological Report

The original report is now close to two years old. It does however appear to have been reviewed in August this year, though it is unclear whether or not this included a site visit as the only evidence of the review is the date against version 2 of the report.

However, I know the site and I am satisfied that it is very unlikely that there will have been any material changes to the ecological value of the site. I recommend however a condition along the following lines is applied to any permission.

If the development hereby approved does not commence prior to 31st March 2023:

- ***A fully updated ecological appraisal will be provided to and agreed in writing by the LPA and;***
- ***Any new recommendations of the report implemented in full prior to occupation.***

Protected Species

I previously accepted that all such species could be reasonably discounted based on the habitats available, scale of site and sites isolation from habitats where such species may be present. This is still my position on this development. No further information or measures are required.

Nesting Birds

The site was previously assessed as having very low potential for nesting birds with no scrub present and the mature trees open canopied and lacking rot holes. The trees are also retained. Since the ecological assessment scrub appears to have developed on the site. I therefore recommend a condition along the following lines is applied to any permission.

No works to trees or shrubs 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.

Invasive Species

Monbretia was recorded on the site. The presence of the watercourse also makes the site high risk for species such as Himalayan balsam. Whilst not recorded by the ecologist, this species is an annual and would not have been visible in January. Streetview however indicates that this species is present.

Monbretia is not particularly invasive in this sort of location. The only risk of an offence would be if excavated material was transported off site. Retention or movement around the site would not be an offence. Himalayan balsam is however highly invasive. I therefore recommend a condition along the following lines is applied to any permission.

Prior to any earthworks a method statement detailing control and/or avoidance measures for himalayan balsam and monbretia should be supplied to and agreed in writing to the LPA. The agreed method statement shall be adhered to and implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.

Proximity to a Watercourse

A minor watercourse passes through the site, presumably a tributary of the River Roch, though it appears to be culverted from this point to wherever it discharges, historic maps indicating it joined the Roch near the M66 roundabout. The Brook is being retained though one footbridge appears to be proposed between parking and the houses. There are risks during and post construction of sediment and pollutants entering the watercourse and post development of additional discharge pressure on the culvert causing flooding downstream.

These risks however appear minor and can be dealt with through a construction and environmental management plan and drainage conditions.

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 main ecological features on site are the retained trees, though streetview indicates more trees were present until relatively recently. Tree clearance has occurred in the last 10 years. The watercourse is also retained with a minor negative impact. The ecological consultants also recommended enhancement measures along the Brook and bird boxes on retained trees. I agree with these recommendations which do not appear to have been applied.

I recommend additional soft landscaping is provided, including new native trees to replace those previously removed, planting along the Brook (introduction of suitable wetland trees and shrubs such as willows, alder, bird cherry, guelder rose and alder buckthorn, and riparian species such as branched bur-reed, and yellow flag-iris) and bird boxes for hole nesting birds on three of the retained trees. ***The details can be conditioned***

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Place

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