

made of the species that may have inhabited these trees/hedgerows prior to felling. It can be presumed with some certainty that bats, birds and other ecology was present on this site before the chainsaw gangs went in. The destruction took place during the nesting season.

Solihull MBC's own 'Trees on Development Sites - Design Guide' (Landscape and Ecology) has specific guidance for developers seeking planning permission and it is quite evident that this guidance was ignored by the developer. For example, the guidance refers to BS5837 (Trees in relation to construction), stating 'Appropriate surveys must be undertaken to ensure that development proposals take account of tree, areas of woodlands and hedgerows on and immediately adjacent to the site'. This seems not to have happened.

It also appears no topographical survey, accurately measuring and showing existing site feature, including trees, stumps was undertaken.

In relation to the benefits of gardens I present the following comments. Source:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-powers-to-prevent-unwanted-garden-grabbing>

Dr Ross Cameron, School of Biological Sciences, University of Reading:

There are real benefits that gardens bring to our quality of life. Vegetation around buildings keeps us cool in summer and reduces our energy bills in winter, as well as protecting us from flooding. Gardens are also great for our mental and physical wellbeing. They reduce our stress and keep us fit because we can work in the garden for hours without feeling we are doing exercise as a chore.

Research has demonstrated that gardening can improve self-esteem, communication skills, attention span and even educational performance. In essence, protecting gardens is important to improve quality of life, and particularly for people in cities.

Richard Bashford - Project Manager, RSPB:

Gardens are mini nature reserves on our doorsteps and vital habitats for all sorts of wildlife. Many much loved species rely on green spaces like gardens, such as the song thrush and house sparrow, both of which have suffered massive declines in the last few years. House sparrow numbers have plummeted by over 60 per cent and we have lost almost 75 per cent of song thrushes. If more garden space is turned into buildings they will likely decline further and the wonder that children experience on the doorstep will dwindle.

We hope that the new measures will protect the habitats of species that have become synonymous with English gardens and demonstrate a rich eco system in our own back yards such as frogs, toads and bumble bees.

I ask Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council refuse this planning application and in doing so comment on the wanton destruction of land prior to the submission of the application.

Yours faithfully,



Blythe Ward Councillor.

