

Good afternoon,

Thank you consulting GMEU on the application at T G I Fridays, Valley Park Road, Prestwich (73486).

No ecological documents such as a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) appear to have been submitted. However, from a review of satellite imagery and Google Street View, the site predominantly comprises a building only, with a car park and some small shrubs adjacent. Although it's not overly clear from the proposed plans, I assume that the shrubs will be retained and the works would be restricted to the existing building (e.g. the new shop front) and hardstanding where the ramp will be created. If this is the case, then a PEA is not considered to be required as no habitat removal will take place, and it is highly unlikely that protected species would be adversely impacted by the works.

I have the following general recommendations:

- Protected species can turn up in unexpected places and the granting of planning permission does not negate the need to abide by the laws which are in place to safeguard biodiversity. An informative should be used so that the applicant is aware that they must seek ecological advice should they find or suspect that the proposals will impact on protected species.
- Work that will impact on habitats where nesting birds may be present (for example vegetation clearance), should not be undertaken in the main bird nesting season (March – August) unless suitable checks for active bird nests have been undertaken. We would suggest that a condition to this effect be placed on any permission.
- Planning policy encourages enhancements and net gains for biodiversity to be delivered through the planning system (e.g. NPPF). Wherever possible measures to enhance the site for biodiversity should be secured as part of this planning application and could include the integration of bat and bird boxes at the appropriate heights/aspects. We would suggest that a condition to this effect be placed on any permission.

Provided that the shrubs are retained, the proposal would be exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) under the de minimis rule (less than 25m² of habitat to be removed).

Kind regards,

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