

Hertfordshire LEADS (Ecology)  
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18/08/2026

**Application:**

[26/01070/FP](#)

External alterations to windows and doors, roof alterations with installation of inset balconies and dormer windows, hard and soft landscaping alterations to include replacing existing grassed area with rear terrace and installation of steps, installation of side terraced area and installation of refuse storage and cycle stores and installation of external lighting.

Pease House Tilehouse Street Hitchin  
Hertfordshire SG5 2DX

**Documents:**

- Preliminary Roost Assessment by MKA Ecology (May 2026)
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement by Barton Hyett Associates (July 2026)
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) by MKA Ecology (April 2026)
- Statutory BNG Metric Calculation Tool (2.4.26)
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**Consultancy:**

- MKA Ecology

**Summary of Advice:**

Application can be determined with Conditions and Informatives listed

**Pre-determination**

- [Protected species](#) – No further surveys required.
- [BNG](#) – Sufficient minimum information for determination.

**Determination**

- [BNG](#) - Enhancements are not significant.
- [Conditions and Informatives:](#)
  1. Protection of tree 'TB4' from damage – Compliance Condition
  2. Mitigation and Enhancement Compliance Condition

**Post- Determination**

- [BNG](#) - Guidance on the BGP stage.

## **Comments and recommended Conditions and Informatives:**

### **Protected species**

1. **Bats:** A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was carried out by MKA Ecology Ltd in April 2026. The PRA identified no potential roost features (PRFs) within Pease House and assessed the building as being of Negligible bat roosting potential. The trees on-site were also assessed for their potential to support roosting bats. PRFs were identified on one of the trees on-site, 'TB4', assessed as PRF-M; However, this tree is not to be impacted by the proposed works. As such, I would agree that no further surveys are required with regards to bats. The PRA report does however make the following recommendations:
  - "Retain and protect TB4 throughout the development and ensure it remains unlit both during and post-construction. Ensure construction exclusion zones around TB4. Details of these measures should be provided in a CEcMP."
  - "Seek ecological advice if plans change and impacts to TB4 are unavoidable."
  - "Light pollution from any lighting should be minimised both during and after the construction phase. A sensitive lighting scheme should be developed and secured through a planning condition to allow for suitable roosting and foraging areas for bats within the Site."
  - "Provisions should be made for roosting bats at the Site post-development, to include a minimum of two bat boxes."

I would support these recommendations, and I advise that these, alongside the other recommended mitigation and enhancement measures from the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report as mentioned below, are secured by Compliance Conditions (see recommended wording [below](#)).

2. **Other protected species:** An overview assessment of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) by MKA Ecology (April 2026) has been carried out to ensure no additional significant ecological constraints were identified. Based on this assessment and taking the conclusions of the professional ecological assessments on face value, we have concluded that the proposals are unlikely to have any significant impacts on other protected species. Any mitigation and enhancement measures of these reports can be secured by a [Compliance Condition](#), as mentioned above.

### **BNG – Pre-determination**

1. **Habitat Assessment:** Sufficient information has been provided to allow the LPA to consider the UK habitat and habitat condition assessments provided. Based on this information, I advise that the LPA can be confident that the habitat assessment is sufficient to populate the biodiversity metric.
2. **Minimum BNG information pre-determination:** A baseline map has been provided which is consistent with the habitat assessment. The submitted metric containing the metric start page includes the completion date and the name of the *Hertfordshire LEADS provides Landscape, Ecology, Archaeology, Design and Sustainability support to planning departments in Hertfordshire.*

person completing the metric. The metric calculation tool (Statutory metric – dated 2.4.26) shows base line values of 0.52 Habitat Units and 0.04 Hedgerow Units. The baseline habitats are consistent with the baseline habitat map and outcomes of the botanical surveys submitted. As a result, I have no reason to doubt these values.

3. **Strategic Significance:** The values for the baseline habitats have been set as low in line with government LNRS guidance.

Consequently, I advise that the minimum information requirements for BNG predetermination have been met and the application can be determined accordingly.

#### BNG – Determination

1. **Non-significant on-site enhancements:** Due to the scale and type of the proposed BNG on-site enhancements, I advise that they should be considered non-significant.
2. **An overall net gain greater than 10% that meets the trading rules has been shown to be possible.** This proposes to be achieved by delivering an on-site net gain of +0.10 habitat units resulting in a 18.88% increase and +0.01 hedgerow units resulting in a 34.03% increase.

#### BNG – Post-determination

1. **LNRS & Post Determination Strategic significance:** Areas of the application site are covered by mapped measures within the strategy. If the application is approved, the Biodiversity Gain Plan and supporting metric should reflect high strategic significant values for any areas (1) that are shown in the published local strategy and (2) deliver the mapped measures for that area. Any post development habitat interventions that meet both of these criteria will achieve a biodiversity unit uplift.
2. **Biodiversity Gain Plan:** I advise this is completed using the government template. In order for the Biodiversity Gain Plan to be discharged, it should be submitted with the following minimum information either within the body of the plan or as supporting information:
  - A completed metric tool calculation that demonstrates:
    - a minimum 10% net gain achieved within the trading rules and consistent with the figures quoted within the Biodiversity Gain Plan.
    - a fully completed start page, including project details and the date that the final version of the metric was completed.
    - where off-site units are being used, these should be shown in the appropriate tab of the metric, and the off-site gain site summary should be completed.
  - Pre-development and post-development plans (showing the location of on-site habitat, the direction of north and drawn to an identified scale). Post-development

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plans should be sufficient to record the location of the post determination habitats within the final metric submitted to discharge the BGP.

- If off-site units are being used, the biodiversity net gain register reference number will be required for a completed BGP.
- Proof of purchase if they're buying statutory biodiversity credits.
- A description of how they will manage and monitor significant on-site gains

#### Conditions and Informatives

1. **Protection of tree 'TB4' from damage – Compliance Condition:** *"The tree with bat roosting potential, referred to as 'TB4' in the Preliminary Roost Assessment by MKA Ecology (May 2026), should be protected from damage. Protection barriers and/or a no-dig policy may be required and the Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement by Barton Hyett Associates (July 2026) should be consulted, with further advice sought from an Arboriculturist and/or Ecologist if necessary. Protection should be installed on site prior to the commencement of any works on site."*
2. **Mitigation and Enhancement Compliance Condition:** *"The development shall be completed in strict accordance with the mitigation and enhancements measures within the ecological reports as submitted with the planning application. All the biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures shall be implemented in full according to the specified timescales, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority, and all mitigation features shall thereafter be permanently retained for the stated purposes of biodiversity conservation."*

I trust these comments are of assistance and kind regards.

Isabelle Hasell

Assistant Ecology Advisor, Hertfordshire LEADS