BIODIVERSITY CONDITIONS STATEMENT

For the erection of a detached self-build replacement dwelling



AT PARK HOUSE FARM, STRAIGHT DROVE, FARCET PE7 3DJ

Produced by David Hartley Associates — September 2026

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Introduction and Context

David Hartley Associates have been commissioned by Mr and Mrs Genovese (the applicants) to prepare this Biodiversity Method Statement to support the conditions discharge for a full planning application for the proposed development at Park House Farm, Straight Drove, Farcet, PE7 3DJ.

This statement includes detailed information on the ecological baseline data and how to implement the recommendations established across the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) conducted on 06/03/2026 and a subsequent, Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) completed on 21/07/2026.

Baseline Ecological Conditions

The application site sits within a flat, predominantly agricultural landscape characterized by open arable fields, drainage networks, and surrounding farm units. Baseline conditions are definitively categorised into distinct habitat and faunal groupings:

Habitats and Flora

Developed Land; Sealed Surface (u1b): The primary structural footprint consists of a tarmacked entrance gateway and central courtyard yard area used for equipment storage. This area exhibits localized ruderal/ephemeral vegetative growth including pointed spear-moss, common nettle, cleavers, creeping thistle, and wild carrot. Per the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, it holds negligible condition value.

Sparsely Vegetated Land (u1f): Sited along the southwestern boundary and adjacent to building B1, featuring an approximate 40% vegetative cover consisting frequently of herb robert and peat moss. This habitat holds a moderate condition value.

Scattered Trees (32): A total of 16 scattered trees stand along the southern and western boundaries. Species comprise native semi-mature and young individuals of Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), and Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), all except T5 ash evaluated in moderate condition.

Fauna

Roosting Bats: The four permanent building structures on site (industrial unit B1 and outbuildings B2, B3, and B4) were inspected during the July 2026 PRA. B1 is a sealed, metal-framed corrugated building with no accessible entry points. No evidence of roosting bats (droppings, stains, or feeding remains) was found anywhere on site. All buildings and the 16 scattered trees possess negligible bat roosting value.

Foraging and Commuting Bats: The tree lines and adjacent modified grasslands are determined to have moderate suitability for commuting and foraging local bat populations.

Amphibians & Great Crested Newts (GCN): No breeding ponds exist on site. Two off-site ponds lie within 500m; Pond 1 (P1) is situated ~42m northwest and Pond 2 (P2) is ~150m northwest. A Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment reveals a potential Amber Risk (Offence Likely) for P1 based purely on proximity, though intervening terrestrial habitats are heavily optimized/suboptimal. The scattered construction and electrical rubbish piles on site provide potential tracking or refuge opportunities for common amphibians.

Badgers: No active badger setts or diagnostic signs were recorded within the site or a 30m accessible buffer zone. However, historical data from 2025 noted 6 badger holes on adjacent lands to the north, and an active mammal pathway remains present beneath the western perimeter fence line.

Reptiles & Small Mammals: The debris piles and sparsely vegetated land offer minor basking and shelter opportunities for reptiles and small mammals such as western European hedgehogs.

Nesting Birds: No active nests or bird activity were recorded within the buildings during the optimal mid-summer survey. The perimeter trees provide high seasonal nesting value for common species.

Foreseen Ecological Impacts

The proposed development restricts its primary construction footprint to the developed, hardstanding zones and the removal of the redundant portal frame building B1.

Roosting Bats & Nesting Birds (Structures): The July 2026 PRA confirms that structures B1–B4 hold negligible roosting and nesting value due to tight structural sealing. No direct impacts to roosting bats or structurally nesting birds will occur.

Vegetation and Trees: The 16 scattered perimeter trees are marked for retention within the layout plan except for 1 T5 Ash. Consequently, direct loss of arboreal habitat is largely avoided. The Arboriculturalist has stated that T5 should be removed on arboricultural grounds.
Terrestrial Mortalities: Site clearance actions involving the moving of construction materials and rubbish piles carry a localized risk of causing accidental death or injury to sheltering amphibians, reptiles, and hedgehogs, if present.

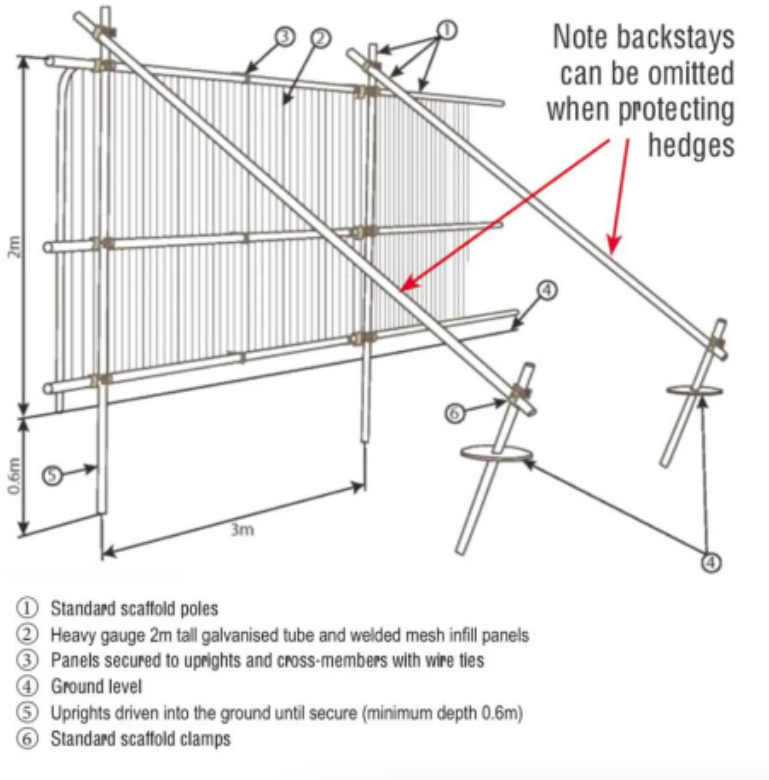
Light Disturbances: Unmitigated external security lighting post-development could result in light spill across the southern and western tree lines, disrupting dark corridor movements for foraging or commuting bat species.

Precautionary Working Methods (Fauna)

To protect wildlife and strictly satisfy the wildlife legislation framework, the following operational constraints must be implemented by the principal contractor throughout the site clearance and construction periods:

Roosting Bats and Nesting Birds Contingency

Retained Trees Protection: All 15 retained trees will be fenced off and protected during construction activities using standard root protection buffers.



Unexpected Discovery Protocol: In the highly unlikely event that a bat, bat dropping, or an active bird nest is discovered during the dismantling or clearance phases, all works must immediately cease within that zone, and a licensed ecologist must be contacted to determine an appropriate course of action.

Vegetation and Site Clearance Windows

Nesting Bird Window: Any minor shrub or vegetation clearance must occur outside the nesting bird season (1st March to 31st August inclusive). If clearance is required within this window, a qualified ecologist must conduct a pre-commencement inspection within 24 hours prior to works. Active nests will be cordoned off with a 3–5m exclusion buffer until young have fully fledged.

Hibernation Window: Removal of ground debris, pallets, and rubbish piles must avoid the amphibian and reptile hibernation period (November to February) to ensure animals are active and capable of natural dispersal.

Ground Clearance and Debris Management

Hand Dismantling: All rubbish located along the eastern and southern boundaries must be carefully dismantled by hand under a precautionary approach.

Storage Controls: Cleared brash, debris, and materials must be stored off the ground on pallets or removed from the site immediately to prevent wildlife from seeking secondary refuge within active working zones.

Exclusion Fencing: Temporary Heras fencing must be installed around the designated working footprint to clearly isolate construction activities from the adjacent grassland and boundary habitats.

Safe Working Practices for Mobile Species (Badgers, Mammals, GCN)

Toolbox Talk: Before any operations begin, all contractors must attend an ecological toolbox talk detailing the potential presence of protected species, safe handling practices, and legal obligations.

Excavation Safeguards: Any open trenches or excavations left open overnight must include a rough-sawn timber escape ramp (angled at less than 45°) or be securely covered to prevent badgers, hedgehogs, or amphibians from becoming trapped.

Pipework Sealing: All structural or drainage pipework exceeding 100mm–150mm in diameter must be securely capped overnight to block entry by sheltering fauna.

Pollution & Chemical Controls: All fuels, chemicals, and potential pollutants must be stored in bunded areas strictly in accordance with COSHH regulations, preventing toxic runoff into the local ditch networks.

Natural Dispersal: Common amphibians, small mammals, or reptiles encountered during operations must be allowed to naturally disperse or be carefully relocated by hand to dense, sheltered vegetative cover along the retained boundaries out of harm's way.

Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy

In accordance with local plan policies LP30 and LP31, and reflecting the self-build exemption status regarding statutory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain mandates, the applicant is fully committed to delivering meaningful ecological enhancements. The following target provisions will be integrated into the final design scheme to uplift the site's long-term wildlife capacity:

To provide enhanced roosting opportunities for cavity and crevice-dwelling bat species, two forticrete cast stone bat boxes will be built directly into the fabric of the new residential dwelling. These boxes are to be positioned between 3 and 5 metres above ground level on a south or south-westerly facing elevation, ensuring a clear flight path away from any direct artificial light sources.



For bird species, a minimum of two Schwegler 1B bird boxes will be securely installed onto mature trees along the site boundaries. These will be located approximately 3 metres high, angled away from prevailing winds, driving rain, and strong midday sun to maximise seasonal nesting success.



To maintain essential terrestrial pathways across the landscape for small mammals, particularly the Western European hedgehog, all new boundary hedge plants will be planted at minimum 150mm centres to allow ease of passage.

Finally, a low-impact external lighting strategy will be strictly implemented post-development to protect the surrounding tree lines and open countryside. All new external lighting will utilise downward-shielded, low-intensity directional LED fixtures to maintain dark travel corridors for local foraging and commuting wildlife, fully adhering to the standard Bat Conservation Trust Guidance Note 8 (2023) parameters.

Low-Impact External Lighting Strategy

Introduction and Policy Context

This section outlines the detailed external lighting design strategy required by condition no.4 In accordance with Huntingdonshire District Council Local Plan Policy LP30, this strategy has been designed to strictly protect the surrounding open countryside from artificial light pollution. Furthermore, it ensures that dark commuting corridors and seasonal foraging areas along the retained southern and western tree lines remain completely viable for local wildlife populations, specifically foraging and commuting bats. The specifications detailed below have been

formulated to fully comply with the joint conservation guidelines set out in the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals Guidance Note 08/23 titled Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night.

Operational Lighting Zone Requirements

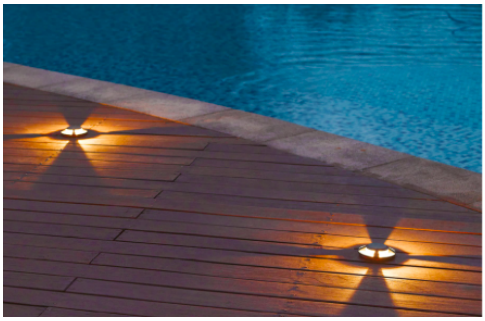
The external lighting scheme is strictly divided into functional zones to balance domestic safety, accessibility, and ecological protection.

Domestic entrance illumination is restricted to the immediate areas surrounding the functional entrance doors of the replacement dwelling. A total of two “Coastal Faroe Outdoor Wall Lights in Galvanised Steel” will be positioned next to the front door to provide threshold safety. A further two “Coastal Faroe” units will be mounted next to the rear bi-fold doors, and a single “Coastal Faroe” unit will be placed adjacent to the rear utility room door.



Guidance illumination along the driveway will consist of twelve Firstlight 7w, 188 lumen, 2700k LED walk and Driveover 4-Way Ground Lights finished in Graphite. These low-level, ground-oriented fixtures will be positioned strategically along the access route to outline the vehicular and pedestrian path safely without casting light upwards into the surrounding sky or adjacent fields.





Ecological dark zones cover the entire southern and western boundaries of the site where the sixteen scattered trees are located. No direct or indirect artificial light spill will be permitted to encroach upon these boundary tree lines, ensuring that the existing mammal pathways and aerial commuting routes remain dark and undisturbed.

Technical Specifications and Design Controls

To eliminate glare and light trespass into the surrounding rural landscape, all selected external luminaires must incorporate strict technical safeguards.

Coastal Faroe galvanised steel fixtures will be fitted with warm white LED lamps with a colour temperature strictly limited to 2700 Kelvin or lower, as cool white light contains blue spectrum wavelengths that highly disrupt nocturnal fauna.

The five Coastal Faroe wall units must be mounted facing vertically downwards and utilize their integrated downward-oriented design to ensure they achieve an upward light ratio of zero per cent.

Twelve Firstlight ground-mounted driveover fixtures are specifically selected for their 4-way omnidirectional, low-glare covers which direct the 7w 2700k output laterally across the ground surface rather than spraying light vertically into the atmosphere.

Operational control will be managed through integrated passive infrared motion sensors and timer overrides on the five entrance and utility door lights, ensuring that entrance lighting is activated only when physically required and turns off automatically after a short 5 minute period.

The twelve Firstlight driveway guidance fixtures will be controlled by a combined dusk-to-dawn photocell and automatic midnight timer switch, which ensures that guidance path lights are fully extinguished during the late-night hours when bat commuting and small mammal foraging activities are at their peak.

Conclusion

By strictly adhering to the precautionary working protocols detailed within this statement, the proposed self-build development will successfully avoid causing adverse impacts to local protected or notable wildlife species. The near total retention of 15 boundary trees (one category U ash tree to be removed) and the introduction of permanent nesting, roosting, and passage enhancements, ensures this development satisfies the requirements of Huntingdonshire District Council planning policies LP30 and LP33.