

Gen Collins, Principal Planning Officer, Wiltshire Council
Our reference: 25059.cd/cb

Your reference: [REDACTED]

10th April 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

**The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017
EIA Screening Opinion: Hawke Ridge Business Park, Westbury BA13 4LD
Proposal: Erection of: (i) 1 No. retail convenience store (Class E), 3 No. flexible retail units (Class E), and roadside drive through unit (sui generis); (ii) a 64-bed care home (Class C2); and (iii) approximately 275 No. residential dwellings (Class C3) with associated access, green and blue infrastructure works.**

1.0 Introduction

We are instructed by Hawke Ridge Business Park Ltd and Bellway Homes Ltd to submit a request to Wiltshire Council for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening opinion on the matter of whether or not the above proposal is 'EIA development' within the meaning of the 2017 Regulations, to inform the submission of a full planning application.

The full planning application proposal, which is being prepared for submission in Q2/Q3 2026 has been informed by baseline studies across a range of applicable disciplines, an area character assessment, and pre-application enquiries that have been undertaken with Wiltshire Council (LPA Ref: [REDACTED]) and Natural England (NE Ref: DAS-A022762).

The above development falls within the description at paragraph 10(b) *Urban Development Projects* of Schedule 2 to the 2017 Regulations. Therefore, we consider the proposal to be 'Schedule 2 development' within the meaning of the 2017 Regulations.

Taking into account the selection criteria in Schedule 3 to the 2017 Regulations it is not considered that the proposal is likely to have significant effects on the environment, see the Statement of Reasons enclosed.

The enclosed EIA Screening Request comprises the following information:

- Planning Cover Letter: PlanningSphere
- Site Location Plan (DRWG: P25-2563_DE_01_A_07): Pegasus
- EIA Screening Framework Masterplan (DRWG: P25-2563_DE_01_F_01): Pegasus
- Statement of Reasons: PlanningSphere

2.0 Background

Hawke Ridge Business Park comprises 14.67 ha of land that is a strategic employment allocation in the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS). The site is allocated for a mix of B class employment uses under Core Policies CP2: *Delivery Strategy* and CP32: *Westbury Community Area*. The site also benefits from an implemented outline planning permission for employment uses and has been subject to an extensive and longstanding marketing process.

3.0 Planning Context

(i) Site Location

The application site, Hawke Ridge Business Park, is located approximately 1.5km north of Westbury and 5km to the south of Trowbridge.

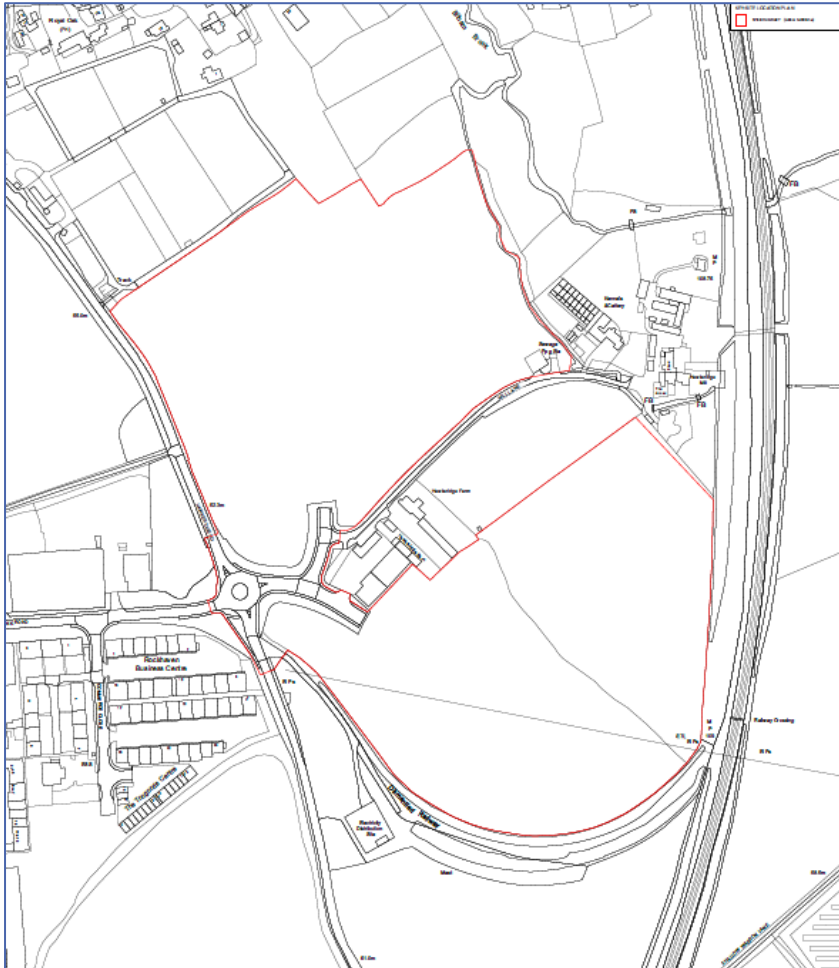


Figure 1. Extract from Site Location Plan showing the redline extent of the application site which extends to 14.67ha

The site lies within the A350 corridor route near to the employment sites of West Wiltshire Trading Estate and the White Horse Business Park, Trowbridge. The site is located 100 metres east of the West Wilts Trading Estate and 2km south of the A350/ A363 junction near Yarnbrook. It is bound by Hawkeridge Road to the west (B3097), the railway line to the east, and agricultural land to the north and south. Westbury Railway Station lies approximately 1.3km to the south of the site.

The site is accessed from the B3097 via a four roundabout. The B3097 forms one of the main connecting routes into Westbury to the south. Via this route, the site links to the A350, which is one of the primary north-south vehicular movement routes between Chippenham and the M4 Junction 17 in the north and the A36 in the south. A public footpath (HEYW6) runs to the northeast. The nearest bus stops are within 400m of the site on the B3097.

The site is bisected by Mill Lane with the proposed development split across two areas either side of the road. Located on Mill Lane between these two development areas is the grade II listed

Hawkeridge Farmhouse and its associated residential curtilage and ancillary outbuildings, Hawkeridge Barn, and a group of existing employment buildings.

The existing arable land comprises two land parcels: Parcel A: c. 7ha; and Parcel B: c. 7.5ha. The two parcels of land are mostly enclosed by vegetation, physically and visually containing the site with defensible boundaries. Part of the existing perimeter vegetation is 'advanced planting' associated with the implementation of outline planning permission 15/04092/VAR – see planning history below.

The B3097 Hawkeridge Road forms the western boundary of the parcels, whilst Parcel A's eastern boundary is defined by Bitham Brook and the dismantled railway embankment along Parcel B's southern boundary creates visual containment.

(ii) Planning History and Lawful Use

Hawke Ridge Business Park is allocated in the Council's Core Strategy (adopted 2015) for a mix of B class employment uses under Core Policies *CP2: Delivery Strategy* and *CP32: Westbury Community Area*. The lawful use of the site, as existing, is agricultural land. Recorded planning history on the Council's public access system for Hawke Ridge Business Park includes the following decisions:

Reference	Description	Decision
PL/2021/09252 Promoted by Amazon	Development of a new industrial warehouse (Use Class B8) with ancillary office and associated parking, van storage, van staging areas and ancillary infrastructure.	Withdrawn 31.03.2023
17/01201/REM HRBP NB. extant	Reserved Matters application relating to appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale: (15/04092/VAR): Erection of 20 No. commercial units (numbers 1-12 and 14-21) (Class B1, B2 and B8) and associated works	Permitted 20.07.2017
16/12236/FUL HRBP NB. lapsed	Erection of 1 drive through retail unit (Class A5/A3); 3 retail units (Class A5); and 1 convenience store (Class A1) and associated works.	Permitted 21.04.2017
16/06752/REM HRBP NB. extant	Application for approval of reserved matters relating to appearance, landscaping, layout and scale (15/04092/VAR Erection of 4 No. Warehouse Units -Use Class B8- and associated works).	Permitted 10.11.2016
16/06637/ADV HRBP Implemented	2 x internally illuminated entrance signage to Hawke Ridge Business Park, Westbury	Permitted 08.08.2016
15/04092/VAR HRBP NB. implemented	Variation of condition 10 of planning permission 14/10780/VAR relating to archaeological works	Permitted 30.07.2015
15/01093/FUL HRBP NB. Implemented	Formation of new vehicular turning head and associated works– discharge of condition 2 – maintenance plan	Permitted 04.01.2016
14/10780/VAR HRBP NB. Superseded	Variation of condition 3 of planning permission 14/03118/OUT to enable the development to be implemented on a phased basis.	Permitted 22.12.2014
14/07418/ADV HRBP	Sale/letting board for new Hawkeridge Business park recently consented under W/03118/OUT	Permitted 29.04.2014
14/03182/FUL HRBP NB. Implemented	Erection of pumping station.	Permitted 26.09.2014
14/03118/OUT HRBP	Formation of new business park (Class B1, B2 and B8) access and associated works.	Permitted 26.09.2014

NB. Superseded by 15/04092/VAR	
-----------------------------------	--

The four arm roundabout and associated landscaping works were implemented pursuant to a variation to the original outline planning permission (Ref: 15/04092/VAR). The drainage infrastructure and associated pumping station were implemented pursuant to planning permission 14/03182/FUL.

The implemented outline planning permission 15/04092/VAR is 'timed-out' by virtue of the expiry of the reserved matters time limit condition i.e. it is not procedurally possible to submit any further reserved matters applications pursuant to the OPP.

Various reserved matters and full application for roadside uses were secured speculatively to support the marketing of the site. Two of the reserved matters permissions for employment units remain extant: 17/01201/REM and 16/06752/REM.

The Amazon application (PL/2021/09252) for the northern plot protracted due to a combination of case officer mal-administration and excessive delays relating to ecology consultation responses. As a consequence, Amazon withdrew their application resulting in a significant loss of potential inward investment. The Amazon withdrawal has had a subsequent negative blighting effect on the site marketing process.

(iii) Planning Policy

The statutory Development Plan comprises: (i) the Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted 2015); (ii) Saved policies of the West Wiltshire District Plan 2011 (saved in 2015); and (iii) Wiltshire Housing Sites Allocation Plan (adopted in 2020). There is no Neighbourhood Plan that is applicable to the application site.

At the time of writing, it is understood that Wiltshire Council's Cabinet and Full Council meetings scheduled for May 2026 will be considering an officer recommendation to withdraw the Emerging Wiltshire Local Review (ELP) and commence work on a new replacement plan in accordance with the regulations introduced under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Action 2023 which came into force on 25th March 2026. The new local plan regulations mandate a faster 30-month digital-first plan-making system. Accordingly no weight can be ascribed to the development management policies and allocations contained within the soon to be withdrawn ELP.

(iv) Applicable Designations

Hawke Ridge Business Park is located proximate to Westbury and Trowbridge and is allocated as a strategic employment site in the adopted Core Strategy. The majority of both parcels of land fall within Flood Zone 1 with only the areas immediately adjacent to the Bitham Brook in Flood Zones 2 and 3. Areas of the site are subject to medium - high surface water flood risk, particularly around Bitham Brook and its surroundings to the east. Product 4 data received from the Environment Agency has been analysed providing definitive information.

The site is located within the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation ('SAC') consultation zone. The Trowbridge and Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy (TWBMS) SPD is applicable to the site. Part of the site is located in the 'red' consultation zone due to the proximity of the site to Clanger Wood SSSI to the east.

The grade II listed Hawkeridge Farmhouse and its associated ancillary outbuildings, Hawkeridge

Barn, is located on Mill Lane between Parcels A and B.

(v) Pre-Application Enquiry with Wiltshire Council [REDACTED]

A pre-application enquiry [REDACTED] was submitted on by Carter Jonas behalf of HRBP Ltd and was supported by a Vision Document (November 2024) and a Marketing Report. A final written response was received in December 2025. At this time, it was confirmed officers did not support the principle of development. A key concern raised relating to the need for the employment allocation notwithstanding the extensive marketing evidence. The full application submission will be supported by a detailed Market Advice Report, which is currently being prepared by Knight Frank, which will provide marketing and valuation evidence, to support the applicant's contention that site is not viable for employment use. Other technical and accessibility matters raised in the pre-application advice will be addressed comprehensively in the application submission.

(vi) Pre-Application Enquiry with Natural England (Discretionary Advisory Service)

A pre-application enquiry was submitted to Natural England in November 2025 under their Discretionary Advisory Service (DAS). A meeting with NE officials took place in February 2026. This meeting confirmed that the 'advance' perimeter planting that was implemented pursuant to outline planning permission 15/04092/VAR could be included as part to proposed ecological buffers, and provided advice on the provision of an onsite Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), which should also be considered strategically alongside emerging residential proposals for the nearby Glenmore Farm and Land Off Storridge Road sites, which are anticipated to be the subject of reserved matters and a revised outline planning application submission later in 2026.

4.0 Summary of Proposals

The proposals comprise a full planning application scheme for:

"Erection of: (i) 1 No. retail convenience store (Class E), 3 No. flexible retail units (Class E), and roadside drive through unit (sui generis); (ii) a 64-bed care home (Class C2); and (iii) approximately 275 No. residential dwellings (Class C3) with associated access, green and blue infrastructure works."

The full planning application proposals will be supported by a comprehensive package of plan and reports in compliance with the Council's validation requirements.

5.0 EIA Screening Opinion Request

Following consideration of the enclosed documentation, we would be grateful if the Council could provide an EIA Screening Opinion to concur that an Environmental Impact Assessment will not be required.

Schedule 2 of the regulations sets out the types of projects where, once a particular threshold is reached for the scale of the project they should be screened for the need for EIA.

National Planning Practice Guidance states that an EIA will only be necessary where *significant effects on the environment are likely* (Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 4-017-20170728). Paragraph 18 of National Planning Practice Guidance states that *Only a very small proportion of Schedule 2 development will require an Environmental Impact Assessment* and provides a screening matrix to help identify any likely significant effects (Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 4-018-20170728).

In summary, we consider that the scale, nature and location of these proposals are not likely to have a significant environmental impact and so an EIA is not necessary. To demonstrate this, we set out our conclusions on the likeliness of significant environmental effects in the enclosed Statement of Reasons, informed by relevant sections of the EIA screening matrix published in government guidance on the 2017 EIA Regulations.

6.0 Conclusions

For the reasons set out in the enclosed Statement of Reasons, we conclude that in the circumstances of this case, there are unlikely to be significant effects. As such, the Project is not considered to be EIA Development for the purposes of regulation 5(2)(b) of the EIA Regulations. On this basis we respectfully request that this opinion is confirmed by the Council.

Yours sincerely



Chris Beaver
Director



E 