

Communities Against Factory Farming

To: Wiltshire Council

Application Reference: PL/2026/02714

Date: 15 September 2026

1. Communities Against Factory Farming (“CAFF”) is a nonprofit organisation supporting grassroots coalitions opposing factory farming. This letter sets out CAFF's objections to the above application.
2. The application is for the siting of an additional four pheasant rearing sheds within the previously approved rearing pen at Woodcombe Farm, Brixton Deverill, Warminster, BA12 7EJ.
3. CAFF raises the following principal objections that are specific to this proposal:
 - a. The LPA should address the applicant’s ‘salami-slicing’ of individual projects that effectively circumvent EIA regulatory scrutiny
 - b. Pre-existing conditions and concerns from the applicant’s previous planning permission must be considered
 - c. The LPA should conduct an EIA screening
 - d. Real risks of water pollution to nearby Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - e. Lack of public health and disease considerations
 - f. Lack of animal welfare considerations
 - g. Traffic concerns are unaddressed
 - h. Inconsistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and Wiltshire Core Strategy

4. For the reasons referred to above and in the appendix below, the application should be rejected.

A. The LPA should address the applicant's 'salami-slicing' of individual projects that effectively circumvent EIA regulatory scrutiny

5. CAFF submits that this application must be considered in view of the applicant's full planning history, which shows that this represents a piecemeal development that has been submitted separately to circumvent EIA regulatory scrutiny.
6. The Case Officer Report for the applicant's previous planning application (OL/2025/05237) has helpfully provided a description of the applicant's full planning history.
 - a. Application 18/12077/FUL first established the game rearing on this site, which allowed 7 rearing units.
 - b. Variation of condition application PL/2022/01635 followed to increase the number of rearing units to 10.
 - c. A second variation of condition application, PL/2024/00365 then allowed the number of units to increase to 12. All of these permissions have been implemented on site.
 - d. In 2025, Woodcombe Farm has planning permission for 12 pheasant rearing units on a triangular piece of land located between the farm and an agricultural track that leads behind Brims Down hill.
7. This context is important because this is the third planning permission sought for this rearing operation in under four years: the original permission (2022/01635/FUL) that has been varied for 12 rearing sheds and then an application decided on 18 December 2025 (PL/2025/05237) to extend the boundary of the rearing field.
8. CAFF contends that there are serious concerns of 'salami-slicing' the development in the present application that the LPA must consider so that it does not circumvent the regulatory scrutiny that the EIA regulation affords.

9. In *R v Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council ex parte Milne* [2001] Env LR 22, (“Rochdale”) Sullivan J said at [H7] and [H8]: “If a particular kind of project was, by its very nature, not fixed at the outset, but was expected to evolve over a number of years ... there was no reason why a “description of the project” for the purposes of the Directive should not recognise that reality... The Directive sought to ensure that as much knowledge as could reasonably be obtained, given the nature of the project, about its likely significant effect on the environment was available to the decision taker. It is not intended to prevent the development of some projects because, by their very nature, “full knowledge” was not available at the outset. **This did not give developers an excuse to provide inadequate descriptions of their project.**” (emphasis added in bold)
10. Furthermore, in *R (Ashchurch Rural Parish Council) v Tewkesbury Borough Council* [2023] EWCA 101, the Court held that the identity of the “project” for these purposes is not necessarily circumscribed by the ambit of the specific application for planning permission which is under consideration. This is because ‘the objectives of the Directive and the Regulations cannot be circumvented (deliberately or otherwise) by dividing what is in reality a single project into separate parts and treating each of them as a “project” – a process referred to in shorthand as “salami-slicing”’.¹ This follows that as the applicant appears to be salami-slicing its plans for expanding the rearing operation by dividing them into piecemeal applications, the LAP must conduct the potential future developments of the operations, and conduct an EIA screening to ascertain its likely significant effects to the environment.

B. Pre-existing conditions and concerns from the applicant’s previous planning permission must be considered

11. CAFF also submits that pre-existing conditions and concerns from the applicant’s previous planning permission must be considered because the present application proposes explicit deviation from the planning conditions that were set by the Council.
12. In terms of pre-existing conditions and concerns, CAFF specifically points out that the last planning permission was granted subject to conditions, with an express cap of “no more than twelve rearing units... at any time” in Condition 4. The Council stated

¹ <https://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2023/101.html>

that Condition 4 is imposed ‘in the interests of visual amenity of the area, the landscape beauty of the National Landscape, and neighbouring amenity’.

13. This confirms, in the Council’s own words, that an expansion of Woodcombe Farm would directly affect Cranborne Chase National Landscape, and that the Council considered a 12-unit limit necessary for landscape and neighbouring-amenity reasons as recently as December 2025.
14. It is CAFF’s submission that the current planning application, which proposes to have 4 more units to reach 16 units, must provide adequate reasoning to justify departing from a limit that the Council has imposed in its previous planning permission.
15. Furthermore, there are also other conditions that underline pre-existing concerns expressed by the Council that this application does not address.
 - a. Condition 5 prohibits any external lighting on site, “in the interests of the amenities of the area and to prevent light spillage within the National Landscape.” This application does not state whether the four additional sheds will require any lighting (for example for early-stage brooding of young birds, which commercial gamebird rearing commonly requires).
 - b. Condition 6 provides that “no additional mechanical plant including air handling plant” shall be installed on site, in the interests of amenity and to avoid noise nuisance. This application does not confirm whether the additional sheds involve any mechanical ventilation or heating plant, nor how the applicant seeks to mitigate the additional noise of rearing an additional 8,000 birds.
16. CAFF also notes that Condition 3 required ecological enhancements (bat roosts and bird nesting features) to be submitted for approval within 3 months of that December 2025 decision and installed within a further 3 months, i.e. by approximately June 2026. CAFF requests the Council to confirm whether this condition has in fact been discharged before considering whether a further intensification of the site requires additional ecological enhancement measures.
17. Separately, CAFF also points out that the Council’s own informative in the Decision Notice have stated that gas bottles and loose building materials were observed stored

on site, which the informative states could be blown onto “the adjacent Bridleway BDEV2” and “could be considered to be detrimental to the landscape character of the National Landscape when viewed from the Bridleway”. This demonstrates that there are live concerns relating to the National Landscape and the amenity of a public right of way adjoining the site which must be addressed.

18. CAFF contends the Council cannot properly determine this application without requiring the applicant to address these concerns directly.

C. The LPA should conduct an EIA screening

19. As the applicant’s planning history reveals that the current application represents a piecemeal development for the applicant’s rearing operations, the LPA should consider whether an EIA screening should be conducted.
20. Pheasants are categorised as ‘livestock’ as defined in section 27(1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.² They are gamebirds kept in an enclosure or which are free-roaming but remain significantly dependent on the provision of food, water, or shelter (by and within the release pen) by a keeper for their survival.
21. Schedule 2 to the EIA Regulations includes intensive livestock installations.³ Category 1(c) of Schedule 2 classifies “intensive livestock installations (unless included in Schedule 1)” as Schedule 2 development where “the area of new floorspace exceeds 500 square metres.” Regulation 3 prohibits the grant of planning permission for EIA development unless an EIA has been carried out. When screening whether Schedule 2 development is EIA development, Regulation 5(4) requires the decision-maker to take into account Schedule 3 selection criteria.
22. While the application does not state the floorspace of the proposed sheds, according to CAFF’s calculation based on the proposed floor plan, the combined proposed pheasant shed is comprised of a wider shed of around 40.8 m² (5.65m × 7.23m) and a narrower shed of 25.2m² (3.58m × 7.04m), giving a total of 66 m² per shed, 264m² for 4 sheds.

²<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wild-birds-licence-to-kill-or-take-to-prevent-serious-damage-gl42/gl42-general-licence-to-kill-or-take-certain-species-of-wild-birds-to-prevent-serious-damage#Definitions-used-in-this-licence>

³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/571/schedule/2>

23. Although the 4 sheds alone would be below the 500m² threshold to be categorised as Schedule 2 Development, CAFF submits that they should not be considered in isolation, but instead be considered alongside the 12 already-permitted sheds.
24. CAFF submits that this is the correct approach that is confirmed by case law. *R (Ashchurch Rural Parish Council) v Tewkesbury Borough Council* [2023] EWCA Civ 101 confirms that a local planning authority must assess the functional interdependency of a proposed development with related or previously-approved works, and cannot lawfully treat a phased expansion as a free-standing, insignificant addition simply because it is brought forward as a separate application.
25. In *Burridge v Breckland District Council* [2013] EWCA Civ 228, (“Burridge”) the Court of Appeal held that a planning application for a biomass renewable energy plant and a planning application for a combined heat and power plant linked to it by an underground gas pipe were a “single project,” on the basis that they were “functionally interdependent and [could] only be regarded as an “integral part” of the same development.”
26. CAFF also points out that Lang J, in her judgment in *R(Wingfield) v Canterbury City Council and another* [2019] EWHC 1975 (Admin), [2020] JPL 154, (“Wingfield”) stated at [63] that the question as to what constitutes the “project” is a matter of judgment for the competent planning authority, subject to challenge on grounds of *Wednesbury* rationality or other public law error. At [64] she set out a non-exhaustive list of potentially relevant criteria, which serves as a useful aide-memoire. These include whether the sites are owned or promoted by the same person, functional interdependence, and stand-alone projects. In relation to the last of these factors she said: “where a development is justified on its own merits and would be pursued independently of another development, this may indicate that it constitutes a single individual project that is not an integral part of a more substantial scheme”.
27. It is CAFF’s submission that the present application is plainly an integral part of a more substantial scheme, namely the applicant’s expanding operations for rearing gamebirds at Woodcombe Farm. The case law applies with particular force here, given this is the third successive application for this site in under four years by the same applicant.

28. Considered as the single, functionally continuous rearing installation that it is in substance is, the cumulative total would exceed the 500 m² Schedule 2 threshold.
29. It follows that the Council cannot lawfully screen this application by reference to the 4 additional sheds alone; it must consider whether the cumulative 16-shed (or more, including runs) installation that will exist if permission is granted is EIA development, and if so, that an Environmental Impact Assessment is required before permission can be granted.
30. Even if the LPA does not consider that the proposed development should be considered alongside existing sheds and its cumulative effects, CAFF further contends that since the present application has been established to be a piecemeal development, referencing the first argument presented by CAFF, the LPA should consider potential future developments of the rearing operations that is not restricted to the specific description of this planning application.

D. Real risks of water pollution to nearby Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

31. CAFF notes that the applicant answered no to the question “Is your proposal within 20 metres of a watercourse (e.g. river, stream or beck)?” in the application form’s Flood Risk section, and proposes a sustainable drainage system for surface water.
32. However, according to the submitted location plan, it indicates that there is a watercourse that runs continuously alongside the access track for the length of the site frontage. At the closest point of the working farm and slurry infrastructure (near the boundary corner marked “125.9m,” adjacent to the mapped “Slurry Tank” and “Slurry Bed” features shown on the Location Plan), CAFF’s measurement places the site boundary less than 50 metres from the watercourse.
33. On the applicant’s own submitted evidence, CAFF submits that the “No” answer to the 20-metre watercourse-proximity question in the Flood Risk section warrants the Council’s independent verification, particularly given the working farm’s mapped slurry tank and slurry bed sit considerably closer to the watercourse than the wider site boundary as a whole.

34. In another neighbour map submitted by the applicant, the watercourse shown appears, from its mapped course toward Brixton Deverill, to be part of the same catchment as, and drains toward, the River Wylde, which is a designated component of the River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC), together with the Rivers Avon and Bourne. This is demonstrated by Natural England's River Avon Special Area of Conservation Catchment Map, revised in June 2024, as shown in Figure (1) below.



Figure (1): Natural England's River Avon Special Area of Conservation Catchment Map

35. The map indicates that the SAC is the subject of a dedicated Nutrient Management Plan reflecting a known, actively-managed nutrient sensitivity in this catchment.

36. The application did not at all acknowledge the hydrological connectivity between the mapped watercourse at Woodcombe Farm and the River Wylde itself, which raises serious concerns of water pollution to these ecologically sensitive sites. The River Avon SAC's qualifying features include Desmoulin's whorl snail, sea lamprey, brook

lamprey, Atlantic salmon and bullhead, and an Annex I chalk-stream vegetation habitat.⁴

37. This is a significant consideration that is highlighted by the new National Planning Policy Framework published in August 2026. Policy P3 on living conditions and pollution states that development proposals should be appropriate for their location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, whether these effects are on or off-site; and whether this is as a result of the development itself or the product of preexisting conditions in its vicinity. It further states that in assessing the potential effects of pollution, consideration should be given to the potential sensitivity of the site, and its intended occupiers and users, as well as that of the environment and population in the surrounding area (including where certain groups could be particularly vulnerable to its effects, such as children and older people).
38. More importantly, the policy provides that development proposals should assess and mitigate impacts where the development could have an unacceptable adverse effect on water quality, especially in relation to sensitive water bodies such as chalk streams.
39. CAFF further submits that this is a material planning consideration because England's rivers and lakes are already in a poor state overall with only 14.3% currently having good ecological status, and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs attributes water-quality failure in around 40% of English water bodies partly to agricultural pollution.
40. Given the close proximity to a SAC, and consistent with the approach of *R (Caffyn) v Shropshire Council* [2025] EWHC 1497 (Admin) and *R (Squire) v Shropshire Council* [2019] EWCA Civ 888, which establish that the environmental effects of manure/waste disposal must be assessed, including where handled off-site or by a third party, the Council should require the Applicant to provide a specific water pollution and manure-management assessment for the expanded 16-shed operation before determination, addressing the on-site slurry tank and slurry bed shown on the submitted plans.

⁴ <https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0013016>

E. Lack of public health and disease considerations

41. The application for an additional four sheds would allow the applicant to rear an additional 8,000 birds within a rearing season. Pheasant birds are reared on site for no more than 7 weeks and the partridge remain on site for no more than 14 weeks in any year.
42. CAFF submits that there are significant associated disease and public health risks that have not been adequately addressed by the application.
43. A 2022 Defra/APHA risk assessment concluded that, in high-risk seasons, the release of millions of captive pheasants carries “a very high likelihood of infecting wild birds,” and that released gamebirds can act as “an additional source of susceptible birds as a reservoir of avian flu.”⁵
44. This demonstrates a direct biosecurity risk to the 8 neighbouring properties consulted on this application, several of which sit immediately adjacent to the rearing field and its access track.
45. CAFF contends that the risk of disease to public health must be thoroughly considered. Westfield Farms, a comparable commercial pheasant, partridge and mallard rearing operation in North Yorkshire, suffered a confirmed highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak on 3 March 2026 requiring a full cull and a 3km Protection Zone/10km Surveillance Zone.⁶ This is also the second outbreak at that same premises within two seasons, during a 2025/26 season that had already recorded more confirmed UK outbreaks than the whole of the previous season.⁷
46. While the applicant’s Supporting Statement states the existing sheds are “annually rotated on the site for biosecurity purposes, to reduce the risk of disease spreading”, this claim is not otherwise evidenced.

⁵ Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs, Risk Assessment on the spread of High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N1 to wild birds from released, formerly captive gamebirds in Great Britain: Pheasants, Qualitative Risk Assessment, finalised October 2022

⁶ BBC, Cull imposed after bird flu discovered <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvg33910012o>

⁷ The Yorkshire Post, North York Moors pheasant farm hit by bird flu for second time in a year <https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/country-and-farming/north-york-moors-pheasant-farm-hit-by-bird-flu-for-second-time-in-a-year-5730986>

47. CAFF submits that the Council must require a biosecurity and outbreak-response plan specific to the expanded, 16-shed operation, addressing the effectiveness of the rotation practice, vehicle and personnel biosecurity, and the proximity of neighbouring bird-keeping premises, before determination, particularly given the scale increase this application represents and the current, elevated national HPAI picture.

F. Lack of animal welfare considerations

48. *Animal Equality v North East Lincolnshire Council* [2025] EWHC 1331 (Admin) confirmed that animal welfare is capable of being a material planning consideration under section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

49. The applicant did not provide any assessment on how the proposed development would comply with the relevant welfare requirements for rearing its 32,000 birds, specifically making reference to the Code of practice for the welfare of gamebirds reared for sporting purposes to meet the welfare needs of their animals required in the Animal Welfare Act 2006.⁸

50. The Code affirms that during the production and rearing process, birds are protected from unnecessary suffering by section 4 of the Act. Section 9 of the Act also requires that the birds' needs are adequately catered for.

51. CAFF further notes that other laws, including those relating to planning, registration, medicine controls, disposal of animal by-products, and animal transport also apply. The Code states that it is the duty of everyone involved in the production and rearing of birds to be aware of the relevant laws and codes and to abide by them.

52. CAFF thus submits that the applicant must supply a comprehensive animal welfare statement to satisfy the LPA that the relevant animal welfare standards will indeed be upheld.

⁸<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-practice-for-the-welfare-of-gamebirds-reared-for-sporting-purposes>

G. Traffic concerns are unaddressed

53. The Supporting Statement asserts, without supporting data, that “it is not anticipated that there will be a large increase in traffic movements from this application” and that traffic from the game-rearing enterprise is “minor in comparison to those of the main farm.”
54. CAFF notes that this is an unevidenced assertion rather than a data-based conclusion, and that gamebird rearing generates concentrated seasonal peaks (bulk delivery at the start of a rearing cycle and collection for sale/removal at the end) rather than a steady flow, which a bare assertion of “minor” impact does not address.
55. CAFF asks the Council not to accept this assertion at face value without at least a basic vehicle-movement estimate from the Applicant, covering both routine husbandry traffic and the delivery/collection peaks, for the expanded 32,000-bird capacity.

H. Inconsistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and Wiltshire Core Strategy

56. CAFF submits that the proposed development of supporting the growth of the pheasant shooting industry is not consistent with the policy aims of sustainable development in the new National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) published in August 2026.
57. In September 2026, the Guardian reported that the UK government is considering a crackdown on pheasant shooting in England as part of a consultation on strict new animal welfare laws.⁹
58. In an earlier government publication, Defra’s Land Use Framework for England published in March 2026, the UK government recognised that although recreational gamebird shooting has value as part of countryside economies and culture, there are

⁹https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2026/sep/02/mass-breeding-of-game-birds-without-welfare-checks-may-be-curtailed-in-england?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=bluesky&CMP=bsky_gu

known ‘trade-offs with environmental, economic, and animal health and welfare outcomes’, which ‘can limit the ability of land to deliver multiple benefits, including those for nature and climate resilience.’¹⁰

59. The new NPPF made clear that the planning system needs to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, by managing the use and development of land in the long-term public interests in paragraph 15 of its introduction.¹¹
60. Paragraph 16 defines the objective of sustainable development as ‘meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.
61. Paragraph 17 sets out three overarching and mutually dependent objectives which must be pursued together in order to achieve sustainable development.
- a. The economic objective seeks to support a “strong, responsive and competitive economy”;
 - b. The social objective seeks to “support strong, vibrant and healthy communities” by fostering well-designed, safe places that promote “health, social and cultural well-being”; and
 - c. The environmental objective requires planning decisions to protect and enhance the natural environment, improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change, including supporting the transition to a low-carbon economy.
56. Paragraph 18 confirms that these objectives are not alternatives capable of being traded against one another but must be secured in an integrated and balanced manner.
57. CAFF contends that pheasant shooting does not contribute to the aforementioned objectives.
58. Natural England, estimates that between 39 and 57m pheasants and 8 to 13m red-legged partridges are released in the UK every year.¹² This means that, at the time

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/land-use-framework>

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>

¹² <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5078605686374400>

of their release in August, there is as great a weight of these non-native birds at large in Britain as of all wild birds put together.¹³

59. In 2021, a scientific review of commercial pheasant and partridge reveals that pheasant shooting results in devastating impacts on the environment and ecology in the UK.¹⁴

- a. Each year the gamebird shooting industry uses 376,000 tons of feed including 282,000 tons of wheat i.e. nearly 2% of the UK's annual wheat production.
- b. The gamebird industry administers a disproportionate amount of antibiotics (compared to all other animal production systems in Britain) in attempts to keep the birds healthy. Over the past 20 years many tonnes of antibiotics will have entered the eco-system in this way.
- c. A minimum estimate is that 2500 tonnes of lead shot is fired into the environment by gamebird shooters representing billions of individual pellets, generating high levels of risk in local areas.
- d. Potentially dangerous levels of lead are to be found in gamebird products on sale to consumers, including by supermarket chains.
- e. Releasing pheasants near to roads causes unnecessary road traffic accidents including some motorists who suffer serious injuries.

60. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) has similarly produced studies that identified the various ecological harms of intensively-managed gamebird shooting: the illegal killing of birds of prey, the use of lead ammunition, the burning of peatland habitats and the release of millions of non-native Pheasants and Red-legged Partridges into the natural environment.

61. Releasing large volumes of non-native birds means they compete with songbirds for food, and pollute the soil and waterways with their dung.¹⁵ Given the recognised harm resulting from the practice of releasing tens of millions of non-native pheasants and

¹³ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10530-021-02458-y>

¹⁴ <https://www.labouranimalwelfaresociety.org.uk/2021/07/13/laws-shooting-report/>

¹⁵ https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2026/sep/02/mass-breeding-of-game-birds-without-welfare-checks-may-be-curtailed-in-england?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=bluesky&CMP=bsky_gu

Red-legged Partridges into the countryside each year, RSPB has called for this unsustainable practice to end, and for damaged land to be restored and managed in a manner that benefits wildlife and people.

62. In 2025, Animal Aid published a report titled ‘killing our countryside’ on the impacts of gamebird releases on the environment and biodiversity.¹⁶ Apart from aforementioned environmental impacts, they also revealed the extensive pollution that these rearing operations generate:

- a. Flies, excrement, smells and noise: The intensive battery cage system used for the mass production of gamebird eggs and the large indoor rearing sheds cause a concentrated build-up of bird faeces, which can mingle with bird feed. These waste products can be hazardous, attracting flies and releasing intense odour, with the potential to cause serious pollution to the local environment. Rats are also likely to be attracted and keeping large numbers of birds in overcrowded conditions inevitably causes noise pollution.
- b. Water pollution: collected watercourse samples from land adjacent to game farms show contamination with ammonia and phosphorus and elevated levels of dissolved organic carbon. Ammonia levels exceeded the long-term standard for fresh water ‘significantly’, and were found to be a risk to aquatic life and to the quality of receiving waters.
- c. Long-term environmental damage: Environmental damage caused by non-native pheasant browsing and soil enrichment from their faeces can last for many years. Even after ten years of abandonment, areas used for pheasant pens still show signs of environmental damage. There is only a slow recolonisation of woodland herb species, a long-standing prevalence of species preferring fertile soils, such as nettles, and only low levels of winter green perennials, ancient semi-natural woodland plant species and overall species richness. Where release densities were greater than 1,000 pheasants per hectare no environmental recovery was found even after ten years.
- d. Crop damage: Pheasants can damage crops, particularly wheat, oil seed rape, barley and potatoes when they disperse into arable farmland adjacent to their

¹⁶ <https://www.animalaid.org.uk/news/environment/>

release site. Pheasants are not released or hunted on Jersey, but it is home to a naturalised population. 33% of Jersey farmers believe pheasants severely damage their crops and 27% believe pheasants cause a substantial loss of profit on their yield of brassicas, cereals, fruit and potatoes.

62. Furthermore, there are other national planning policies in the new NPPF that do not favour the approval of this proposal. As the site falls outside of the settlement boundary defined by the Council, national planning Policy S5 principles of development outside settlements should be applied.¹⁷ It states that only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements, as set out in its list.
63. CAFF notes that rearing operations for gamebird shooting does not fall under agriculture because it does not meet the definition for ‘agriculture’ in Town and Country Planning Act 1990. It only includes the breeding and keeping of livestock (any creature kept for the production of food, wool, skins or fur, or for the purpose of its use in the farming of land).¹⁸ This is confirmed by the applicant’s own statement in the application form that the current use of the site is ‘mixed agriculture and pheasant rearing’, clearly distinguishing rearing operations for pheasants from agricultural use of the land. CAFF then notes that rearing operations for gamebirds is not included in the list Policy S5 for the certain forms of development that should be approved outside settlement.
64. Furthermore, the policy also notes that developments should be approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the NPPF.
65. As demonstrated above, the significant adverse effects resulting from pheasant shooting clearly outweigh any apparent benefits of the proposed development.
66. With reference to aforementioned research into the negative environmental and public health impacts of pheasant shooting, there are also other relevant national policy making policies in the new NPPF that strengthens the case for refusing this application:

¹⁷<https://wiltshire-council-open-data-hub-wiltscouncil.hub.arcgis.com/datasets/WiltsCouncil::settlement-boundaries/explore?location=51.157962%2C-2.180284%2C14>

¹⁸ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/section/336>

- a. Policy HC1 requires planning decisions to promote healthy, inclusive and safe communities and to enable and support healthy lives. Development should contribute positively to the quality of life of existing and future communities rather than diminish local amenity or environmental quality.
- b. Policy CC1 states that development plans should take a ‘proactive’ approach to mitigating climate change and supporting the transition to net zero, in accordance with the objectives and provisions of Climate Change Act 2008. These provisions also require the planning system to contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, and shape places in ways that reduce vulnerability to climate impacts and support sustainable patterns of development. Importantly, Policy CC1 also notes that development plans should address any specific risks from climate change in their proposed allocations for development, and necessary adaptations, both of which should be considered for the anticipated lifetime of the development;
- c. Policy CC2 indicates that development proposals should contribute to climate change mitigation while Policy CC3 takes into account a development’s adaptation to climate change. Climate change is therefore a central consideration in determining whether development is sustainable.
- d. Policy N1 imposes a comprehensive duty on planning decision-makers to ensure that development safeguards and enhances the natural and local environment. It requires identifying opportunities for conservation, enhancement and recovery of landscapes, habitats and species, and creating and strengthening ecological networks that are resilient to current and future pressures. This also includes steering location of developments where it would utilise land of least environmental value, and include limiting the scale and extent of development within Protected Landscapes.
- e. Policy N2(2) provides that planning permission should be refused where significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated.

- f. Policy N6(2) states that irrespective of a site's status in nature conservation terms, development proposals which would entail the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists. Policy N6(3) confirms that Policy N6(2) applies to development on land inside or outside a designated area, if it would have an impact on the identified biodiversity or geodiversity value of the area concerned.
- g. Policy P3(2)(b) states that development proposals should not give rise to, or contribute to, an unacceptable level of access to daylight and sunlight for neighbouring residents and occupiers, or unacceptable levels of air, noise, artificial light, water, soil or other forms of pollution on or beyond the site. Adverse impacts of this nature should be avoided where possible, or else mitigated to an acceptable degree.

67. Taken together, these provisions establish that development cannot properly be regarded as sustainable where it fails to protect the natural environment, adequately assess and mitigate climate and ecological impacts, or safeguard the health, well-being and amenity of existing communities.
68. Accordingly, it is CAFF's submission that the LPA must reject this application due to its inconsistencies with the NPPF.
69. CAFF further submits that the proposed development would also be inconsistent with the relevant local planning policy, namely the Wiltshire Core Strategy adopted in January 2015.¹⁹ While the applicant did not make reference to any specific local planning policy that would support the application, CAFF contends that the application does not contribute to any of the spatial objectives of the core policies of Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- a. Strategic objective 1 delivering a thriving economy - the applicant's application form indicates that there will not be any increased employment opportunities for the local community,

¹⁹ <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-core-strategy>

- b. Strategic objective 2 addressing climate change - increased pheasant rearing will only increase emissions and further damage the environment
- c. Strategic objective 3 providing everyone with access to a decent, affordable home - the increased environmental pollution will affect the surrounding environment's availability for further development
- d. Strategic objective 4: helping to build resilient communities - increased pheasant rearing contributes to worsening air and water pollution
- e. Strategic objective 5: protecting and enhancing the natural, historic and built environment - the Council has recognised the impacts on Natural Landscapes in the previous planning permission for the farm
- f. Strategic objective 6: ensuring that adequate infrastructure is in place to support our communities - the applicant did not make any supporting statements to show adequate infrastructure is in place to mitigate the negative impacts of increased pheasant rearing operations

70. It follows that the LPA should also direct refusal based on the incompatibility with the spatial objectives of the local planning plan.

I. Conclusion

71. For the reasons outlined in this Letter of Objection, it is submitted that the Planning Application should be subject to screening and an Environmental Impact Assessment, and should be rejected given the significant environmental effects, incompatibility with the NPPF and local planning policy.

Kind regards,

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