



Committee and date

Southern Planning Committee

27th October 2026

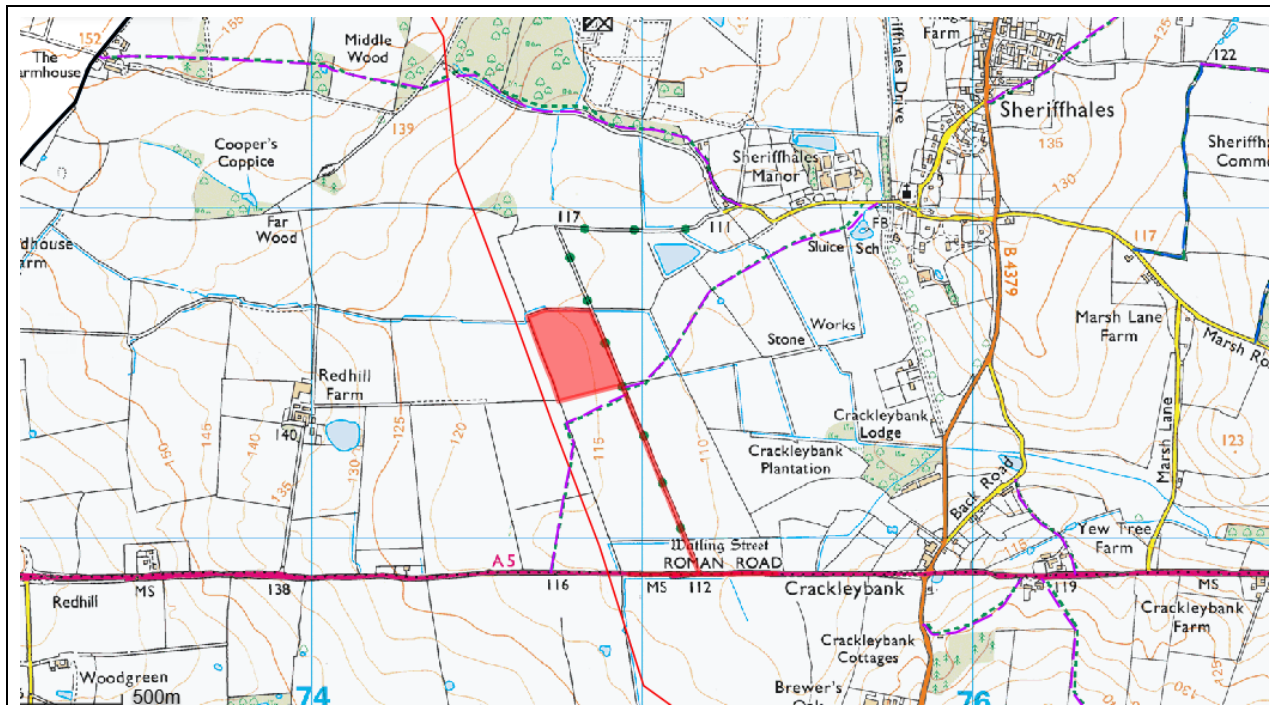
Development Management Report

Responsible Officer: Kassandra Polyzoides, Service Director - Place Shaping

Summary of Application

<u>Application Number:</u> 25/01501/EIA	<u>Parish:</u>	Sheriffhales
<u>Proposal:</u> Erection of a poultry farm including 4no linked poultry houses with linked amenity building and associated concrete apron, feed bins, feed blending room, dead bird shed, dirty water tanks, biomass boiler house, hardstanding yard area and drainage attenuation pond		
<u>Site Address:</u> Proposed Poultry Farm South West Of Manor Farm, Sheriffhales, Shropshire		
<u>Applicant:</u> Mr Anthony Robinson		
<u>Case Officer:</u> Louise Evans	<u>email:</u> Louise.m.evans@shropshire.gov.uk	

Grid Ref: 374846 - 311474



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Recommendation:- Grant Permission subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1 following expiry of the statutory publicity period for the further information published in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, provided that no new material planning considerations arise which, in the opinion of the Interim Head of Planning & Building Control, would alter the recommendation, with delegation to officers to update the reasoned conclusion and any planning conditions to account for further representations received prior to determination.

REPORT

1.0 THE PROPOSAL

1.1 The application seeks full planning permission for an intensive broiler-rearing unit comprising four linked poultry houses, a linked corridor and amenity building, concrete apron, eight feed bins, feed-blending room, dead-bird store, two underground dirty-water tanks, a biomass boiler house and stack, hardstanding, separate entrance and exit points, an attenuation pond and landscape planting. The four houses would provide 160,000 bird places, with 40,000 birds in each building.

- 1.2 The poultry houses would each measure approximately 97.55 metres by 24.69 metres, with 3 metre eaves and a ridge height of approximately 6.23 metres. The biomass building would measure approximately 30 metres by 24 metres, with 6 metre eaves, a ridge height of approximately 9.15 metres and an 11 metre stack. The buildings and feed bins would be finished predominantly in olive green profile sheeting.
- 1.3 Birds would be delivered as day-old chicks and reared for approximately 38 days, followed by a ten-day clean-out and preparation period, giving approximately 7.5 flock cycles each year. Birds would be removed at thinning and final clearance stages which would require limited night-time activity. The operation would employ two full-time staff.
- 1.4 Poultry manure would be removed after each cycle in sealed or sheeted vehicles and sent to a suitably permitted anaerobic digestion facility. Dirty wash-water would be contained within sealed tanks and removed by licensed contractors. The development requires an Environmental Permit before it can operate which is regulated by the Environment Agency.

2.0 SITE LOCATION/DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site is an approximately 5 hectare area of arable land around 800 metres west of Sheriffhales and about 550 metres north of the A5. It occupies the northern part of a long, broadly level agricultural field at approximately 114 to 116 metres AOD. An unclassified track forms the eastern edge and connects southwards to the A5. The built development would lie on the western side of that track.
- 2.2 The northern field boundary is defined by a ditch and outgrown hedgerow, and the eastern boundary by a lower hedgerow with mature trees. Similar arable fields, hedgerows, occasional trees and small water bodies characterise the wider Estate Farmlands landscape. Sheriffhales Model Flying Club occupies part of the same field around 400 metres to the south.
- 2.3 The nearest residential receptors are approximately 670 to 750 metres from the proposed buildings. Public rights of way 0140/3/1 and 0140/3/2 cross or approach the wider field and connect with the unclassified road, while route 0140/2/1 lies further north. The site is in Flood Zone 1. It is not within a designated landscape, although listed buildings, Sheriffhales Conservation Area and the registered park and garden at Lilleshall Hall lie within 2km of the application site.
- 2.4 The application shares the same site as a previous approval, 20/00820/FUL, for the relocation of a pig farm with associated buildings and works, which lapsed in July 2026. The current proposal was always intended to replace rather than

operate in addition to that use. The 20/00820/FUL permission was subject to a legal agreement securing the cessation of intensive livestock rearing within existing buildings at Manor Farm. However, the current application has been assessed on its own merits with regards to amenity such that there is no planning reason to require the applicant to enter into such an agreement for the current submission. The statutory nuisance matter was resolved through an abatement notice and court order outside of the planning system.

3.0 REASON FOR COMMITTEE DETERMINATION OF APPLICATION

- 3.1 The application is reported to Southern Planning Committee because it is an EIA Schedule 1 development and in accordance with the Council's scheme of delegation, it must therefore be referred to Committee for determination.

4.0 COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 Consultee comments

Natural England: no site-specific advice, referring the authority to Impact Risk Zones, standing advice and its duties in relation to designated sites.

Environment Agency: confirms that an Environmental Permit is required. Its advice addresses ammonia screening, noise, odour, dust, bioaerosols, water management, manure management and the biomass boiler. It recommends twin-tracking of the permit and planning processes, adequate water supply, pollution prevention and lawful management of manure and wash-water.

Council Ecology: accepts the ecological survey work and Biodiversity Net Gain proposals. Following review of the April 2026 ammonia assessment and March 2026 lichen surveys, the Council completed Habitats Regulations Assessment screening and concluded that there would be no likely significant effect on Aqualate Mere Ramsar or Motte Meadows SAC. Ecology also concludes that the predicted effects on Millingtons Coppice and Coopers Coppice ancient woodlands would not adversely affect the species present. Conditions are recommended for lighting, bat and bird boxes and skylark plots.

Highway Authority: no objection, subject to delivery of the A5 access improvements, a Construction Method Statement and an enforceable HGV routing plan requiring traffic to use the A5.

Environmental Protection: considers odour effects minimal because of the separation distances and accepts that normal operational noise would be low. It recommends acoustic screening for emergency gable fans and control of manure disposal. It notes that a dust assessment was not submitted.

Lead Local Flood Authority: accepts drainage in principle, subject to a pre-

commencement drainage condition requiring infiltration testing, legible and coordinated drainage drawings, confirmation of the attenuation feature and outfall details, and a maintenance scheme.

Trees: accepts the arboricultural reports and limited on-site losses, subject to tree protection and compensatory planting. Additional replacement planting is required for tree and hedgerow removal associated with the A5 junction works.

Conservation: no objection, subject to implementation of landscape mitigation.

Archaeology recommends a written scheme of investigation and watching brief during groundworks.

Rights of Way: confirms that no public right of way is directly affected.

Historic England: offers no site-specific advice.

ESP Landscape: confirms the LVA can be relied upon to support making an informed planning decision. The predicted adverse effects are localised, and it is considered that the Proposed Development generally complies with relevant aspects of the Council's Local Plan policies on landscape and visual amenity.

4.2

Public representations

Sheriffhales Parish Council: The Parish Council acknowledged the site's location within a rural farming area and recognised the need for agricultural development but expressed concerns regarding the operation and management of the proposed poultry unit, particularly in light of previous issues associated with the former pig unit on the site. Concerns were raised regarding the robustness and independent scrutiny of the Environmental Impact Assessment, the adequacy and speed of enforcement and regulatory responses should problems arise, the applicant's ability to operate the unit in accordance with required standards, staffing arrangements, site management procedures including mortality handling and cleaning regimes, and the need for the development to meet current environmental standards. The Parish Council requested that the application be determined by Planning Committee. Should planning permission be granted, the Parish Council sought regular monitoring of the site by the relevant regulatory bodies, improvements to the A5 junction prior to commencement of development, and the agreement and implementation of the surface water drainage strategy before any works begin.

The application has received 1,510 contributions, comprising 1,494 objections, 11 representations in support and five other representations. The majority of objections are standardised or substantially similar.

Objections

- **Residential amenity:** Concern that the development would generate unacceptable odour, ammonia, dust and other airborne emissions, adversely affecting the living conditions, health and wellbeing of nearby residents. Reference is also made to existing agricultural odour in the locality and the potential for cumulative effects.
- **Traffic and highway impacts:** Concern about additional HGV movements, highway safety, congestion, deterioration of local roads, noise, dust and vehicle emissions. Objectors question whether the surrounding road network and access arrangements are suitable for the scale and frequency of the proposed movements.
- **Adequacy and independence of the environmental information:** Requests have been made for an independent review of the Environmental Statement and the submitted air-quality, ammonia and odour assessments. Objectors question whether the submitted assessments fully address the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of the development.
- **Climate change and greenhouse-gas emissions:** It is asserted that the environmental information does not adequately assess the upstream and downstream greenhouse-gas emissions associated with the poultry operation, including feed production, transportation, energy use, manure management and the wider supply chain. Representors refer to the principles established in *Finch v Surrey County Council* [2024] UKSC 20.
- **Manure, litter and digestate management:** Concern is raised about the storage, transportation and subsequent spreading of poultry manure or litter, including where material may be taken to third-party land or anaerobic-digestion facilities. Objectors contend that the environmental effects of the complete waste-management process have not been assessed adequately, with particular concern about odour, dust, nutrient loading, runoff and pollution of rivers and groundwater.
- **Water quality and agricultural pollution:** Representations refer to the condition of the Worfe operational catchment and nearby watercourses, including Burlington Brook, Wesley Brook and the River Meese. Concern is expressed about existing ecological and phosphate pressures, the site's location within a nitrate-vulnerable zone and a groundwater drinking-water protected area, and the potential for the proposal to add to nutrient and agricultural pollution.
- **Reliance on other regulatory regimes:** Objectors argue that the Council should not assume that environmental permitting, the Farming Rules for Water or other regulatory controls would necessarily prevent pollution or amenity effects. References are made to *R (Squire) v Shropshire Council* [2019] EWCA Civ 888 and *NFU v Herefordshire Council* [2025] EWHC 536.
- **Anaerobic digestion and digestate:** Some objections discuss reported pollution incidents associated with anaerobic-digestion plants and digestate spreading, including nutrient enrichment and fish kills. It is

argued that the potential consequences of receiving, processing or spreading material arising from the poultry operation should form part of the environmental assessment.

- **Water consumption and abstraction:** Concern is expressed that insufficient information has been provided about the quantity and source of water required by the development. Objectors raise the possible effects of water abstraction on water availability, groundwater and protected ecological sites.
- **Ecology and designated sites:** Concern is raised about ammonia and nitrogen deposition on habitats and designated sites, including possible cumulative and in-combination effects with other intensive livestock developments and permitted agricultural installations. Objectors also question whether the implications for Ramsar sites, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and other sensitive habitats have been adequately assessed.
- **Biodiversity and land use:** Representations refer to the potential loss or degradation of habitats, impacts upon wildlife and the use of agricultural land for intensive livestock production. Wider concerns include the environmental consequences of feed production and alleged deforestation associated with imported animal feed.
- **Avian influenza and biosecurity:** Concern is raised about the potential spread of avian influenza and other diseases, particularly given the number of birds proposed and the presence of another intensive poultry unit in the surrounding area. Representors question the adequacy of separation distances and biosecurity arrangements.
- **Public health:** Objections refer to the possible effects of ammonia, dust, bioaerosols and antibiotic use. Wider concerns are raised regarding antimicrobial resistance and the public-health implications of intensive livestock production.
- **Animal welfare:** A significant number of objections oppose the development on animal-welfare grounds, including the proposed stocking levels, the ability of birds to exhibit normal behaviour, overcrowding, disease, injury, stress and mortality. Reference is made to the Animal Welfare Act 2006, animal-sentience legislation and recognised animal-welfare principles.
- **Landscape and rural character:** Concern is raised about the scale, massing and industrial appearance of the four linked poultry buildings and associated infrastructure, together with the effect of the development on the rural landscape and character of the surrounding countryside.
- **Economic and employment considerations:** Objectors dispute the claimed economic benefits of the proposal and argue that agricultural intensification has reduced overall agricultural employment. Concern is also expressed about possible effects on neighbouring businesses, property, tourism and the attractiveness of the area.
- **Food security and agricultural need:** Some representors dispute whether an additional intensive poultry unit is necessary for national or

local food security. They argue that poultry production remains reliant on imported feed and that the use of cereals and agricultural land for intensive livestock production is inefficient.

- **Alternative food-production systems:** A number of representations advocate reduced meat consumption and a greater emphasis on plant-based food production. They argue that alternative agricultural systems would provide greater climate, nature and food-security benefits.
- **Legal proceedings and precautionary approach:** Some objectors request that determination be deferred pending the outcome of other legal proceedings concerning intensive poultry development, river pollution or the adequacy of environmental assessment.

Representations in Support

The supporting representations identify the following benefits:

- contribution to domestic food production and national food security;
- reduced reliance on imported poultry products;
- production under UK environmental and animal-welfare standards;
- support for the agricultural economy and local employment;
- use of modern poultry buildings and management systems designed to control odour, emissions and waste;
- use of biomass energy and other efficiency measures;
- separation of the poultry buildings from residential properties;
- proximity to the A5 and the ability to access the strategic highway network; and
- the applicant's stated experience in responsible agricultural and waste management.

5.0 THE MAIN ISSUES

- 6.1 Environmental Impact Assessment
- 6.2 Principle of Development
- 6.3 Siting, Scale and Design: Landscape and Visual Impact
- 6.4 Residential Amenity: Odour, Noise, Dust and Lighting
- 6.5 Highways, Access and Rights of Way
- 6.6 Ecology, Biodiversity and Habitats Regulations
- 6.7 Flood Risk, Drainage and Water Resources
- 6.8 Manure and Waste Management
- 6.9 Trees, Heritage and Archaeology
- 6.10 Climate Change
- 6.11 Cumulative, Downstream and In-Combination Effects
- 6.12 Other Material Considerations
- 6.13 Environmental Impact Assessment Reasoned Conclusion

6.0 OFFICER APPRAISAL

6.1 Environmental Impact Assessment

6.1.1 The proposal exceeds the Schedule 1 threshold for intensive poultry rearing and is therefore Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development. The Environmental Statement, updated in August 2025 and in October 2026, assesses amenity, flood risk and drainage, ecology and ammonia, farm waste management and climate change, with stand-alone reports covering landscape, highways, heritage and arboriculture.

6.2 Principle of Development

6.2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan therefore remains the statutory starting point for decision making and substantial weight should be afforded to policies that are relevant to the proposal and up to date.

6.2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2026 is a material consideration of significant weight and should be read as a whole. Where Development Plan policies are consistent with the Framework's objectives of achieving sustainable development, supporting a prosperous rural economy, protecting the environment and addressing climate change, those policies continue to attract full weight in the decision-making process. In this case, the proposal has been assessed against the relevant policies of the adopted Development Plan, with due regard also given to the guidance and policy objectives contained within the NPPF 2026.

6.2.3 With regard to the Development Plan, the site lies within the open countryside, where Core Strategy Policy CS5 supports agricultural and rural economic development, provided that large-scale proposals demonstrate no unacceptable adverse environmental effects and accord with Policies CS6 and CS17. SAMDev Policy MD7b similarly supports appropriately located agricultural development where its scale, design and environmental effects are acceptable.

6.2.4 The NPPF recognises the important role that a prosperous and productive agricultural sector plays in supporting the rural economy and food production. Policy E2 enables substantial weight to be afforded to the economic benefits of proposals and the benefits a scheme may have for domestic food production. Policy E4 supports the sustainable growth and expansion of rural businesses, including agricultural development, whilst Policy S5 identifies agriculture as a form of development that may be appropriate in countryside locations where there is an operational need for a rural siting. The Framework does not, however, provide unrestricted support for agricultural development and requires proposals to achieve sustainable development by balancing economic benefits against environmental and social impacts.

6.2.5 Accordingly, whilst substantial weight can be attributed to the contribution the

proposed poultry unit would make towards agricultural productivity, investment and employment within the rural economy, the acceptability of the proposal ultimately depends upon whether its effects in relation to matters such as landscape character, residential amenity, highways, ecology, water quality, climate change and pollution can be satisfactorily mitigated and whether the development accords with the wider objectives of the Development Plan and the environmental protections contained within the NPPF.

- 6.2.6 The proposal is linked to an established farming business and would replace a lapsed permission for an intensive pig unit on the same land. Poultry production is an agricultural use that requires a countryside location. The development would involve substantial capital investment and provide two direct full-time jobs, together with expenditure within the agricultural supply chain. These economic benefits attract substantial positive weight. Accordingly, the proposal benefits from policy support in principle as agricultural development requiring a rural location, subject to consideration of its detailed environmental and amenity impacts.

6.3 **Siting, Scale and Design: Landscape and Visual Impact**

- 6.3.1 Core Strategy policy CS6 seeks to ensure that development is appropriate in scale and design taking into account local context and character, having regard to landscape character assessments and ecological strategies where appropriate. Policy CS17 also seeks to protect and enhance the diversity, high quality and local character of Shropshire's natural environment and to ensure no adverse impacts upon visual amenity, heritage and ecological assets. SAMDev Plan policy MD2 requires that development contributes to and respects locally distinctive or valued character and existing amenity value, and demonstrates how good standards of sustainable design and construction have been employed. SAMDev Plan policy MD7b states that applications for agricultural development should be of a size/scale which is consistent with its required agricultural purpose, and where possible are sited so that it is functionally and physically closely related to existing farm buildings.
- 6.3.2 With regard to policy MD7b, the site is approximately 850 metres from the existing buildings at Manor Farm. Siting the unit next to those buildings would bring it closer to dwellings in Sheriffhales and would not achieve the biosecurity separation needed for a broiler unit. HGVs would also have to use the U6338 and B4379 through the village rather than the A5. The site was previously found acceptable for an intensive livestock unit under 20/00820/FUL. Officers therefore consider that closer siting is not possible in this case and that the proposal does not conflict with Policy MD7b.
- 6.3.3 The four linked poultry houses would form a substantial group of agricultural buildings, supplemented by feed bins, a taller biomass building and an 11-metre stack. Their functional appearance is typical of modern intensive poultry facilities.

The buildings would be located within a large, broadly level arable field and finished in olive-green cladding to reduce visual contrast with the surrounding landscape.

- 6.3.4 Whilst the development is substantial in absolute terms, it would remain agricultural in character and use. Existing hedgerows and trees would largely be retained except where access works necessitate their removal. Additional woodland, hedgerow and grassland planting would assist in integrating the development into the surrounding landscape. Overall, the scale, siting and design are considered appropriate to the agricultural function and rural context of the site.
- 6.3.5 The Landscape and Visual Appraisal identifies the site as lying within the Estate Farmlands landscape type, characterised by mixed farming, medium-to-large field patterns, planned woodland, estate farmsteads and framed views. The site is not subject to any national or local landscape designation.
- 6.3.6 At Year 1, moderate adverse visual effects are predicted for users of Public Right of Way 0140/3/1 and the Model Flying Club, with moderate-to-slight adverse effects predicted for users of Public Right of Way 0140/3/2 and the adjoining unclassified road. Effects upon most residential receptors and road users are assessed as slight or negligible due to separation distances, orientation and intervening vegetation.
- 6.3.7 By Year 15, the establishment of approximately 2,670 square metres of native tree planting, 205 metres of native hedgerow planting and approximately 2.5 hectares of grass and wildflower seeding would reduce the principal visual effects to slight adverse or negligible levels. Landscape character effects would remain slight adverse.
- 6.3.8 Condition 11 in Appendix 1 will secure the detailed planting scheme, its implementation, post-planting maintenance and the replacement of failed planting during the specified five-year period. Whilst some localised visual effects would remain, particularly during the initial establishment period, the residual landscape and visual impacts would be limited and would not conflict with Policies CS6, CS17, MD2 or MD12. Limited adverse weight is therefore attributed to this matter.
- 6.4 **Residential Amenity: Odour, Noise, Dust and Lighting**
- 6.4.1 Core Strategy policy CS5 requires that proposals for large scale new agricultural development demonstrate that there are no unacceptable adverse environmental impacts. Policy CS6 requires that developments safeguard residential and local amenity. SAMDev Plan policy MD7b states that planning applications for agricultural development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there would be no unacceptable impacts on existing residential amenity.

- 6.4.2 The updated odour assessment utilised five years of meteorological data and modelled the proposed 160,000-bird operation. Predicted odour exposure, expressed as the 98th percentile of hourly mean odour concentrations, falls below 1.5 ouE/m³ at all assessed receptors, with the highest predicted concentration recorded at the Model Flying Club grounds at 1.3 ouE/m³. The assessment concludes that all residual effects would be not significant. Environmental Protection has agreed that the substantial separation distances would render residential odour effects minimal, although occasional odour may be perceptible during short clean-out periods.
- 6.4.3 The noise assessment predicts very low impacts from normal operation of fans, boilers and associated vehicle activity at the nearest dwellings, together with negligible internal night-time effects. Emergency gable fans could give rise to a marginal increase in daytime noise levels during rare hot-weather conditions or equipment failures. A 2.8-metre-high acoustic barrier positioned parallel to the western ends of the poultry houses would reduce this effect and is secured through Condition 12 in Appendix 1.
- 6.4.4 Dust and bioaerosol risks have been considered but the nearest residential properties are located substantially beyond the 100-metre distance after which coarse and fine particulate matter emitted from poultry housing ventilation has been demonstrated to disperse and drop down to standard background levels. No further assessment for planning purposes is considered necessary.
- 6.4.5 Condition 12 in Appendix 1 will require the installation of an acoustic barrier and condition 16 will ensure sealed or sheeted transportation of manure. External lighting will be controlled through Condition 15 to protect both residential amenity and ecological receptors. Subject to these controls, officers are satisfied that the proposal would not result in unacceptable effects upon residential amenity.
- 6.5 **Highways, Access and Rights of Way**
- 6.5.1 Core Strategy policy CS6 requires that all development is designed to be safe and accessible. SAMDev Plan policy MD8 states that development should only take place where there is sufficient existing infrastructure capacity. The NPPF states that development proposals should be refused if they would have a severe adverse impact on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion, including cumulative impacts), or an unacceptable impact on highway safety; taking into account any mitigation measures proposed as well as any wider network improvements.
- 6.5.2 The Transport Statement predicts 866 two-way commercial vehicle movements per annum, with the majority of operational days generating between zero and six HGV movements. The peak period is associated with bird removal activities, during which up to 26 two-way HGV movements are anticipated. When compared with the former pig unit permission, the proposal would result in only a modest increase in traffic generation, equating to approximately one additional

vehicle movement per week and fewer than two additional HGV movements per day when averaged across the year.

- 6.5.3 All construction and operational HGV traffic would be required to route southwards from the site via the unclassified highway to the A5. This routing arrangement would be secured through a planning condition and reinforced through the implementation of the highway improvement works previously approved in connection with the former pig unit development. Importantly, the routing strategy would prohibit construction and operational traffic associated with the development from travelling through Sheriffhales. The Local Highway Authority raises no objection to the proposal, subject to the imposition of the access and vehicle routing controls contained within Conditions 5 and 17.
- 6.5.4 The proposed routing controls will ensure that HGV traffic associated with the development utilises the most appropriate sections of the highway network and avoids unnecessary impacts on Sheriffhales village. Officers are therefore satisfied that the traffic generated by the development can be accommodated safely and without detriment to the character or amenity of the local area.
- 6.5.5 Officers do not consider it necessary to require a Construction Method Statement, as suggested by the Local Highway Authority, given the nature of the surrounding highway network, the separate control of HGV routing throughout both construction and operation, and the substantial separation between the development and nearby residential receptors, which is such that significant construction-related highway or amenity effects are unlikely to arise.
- 6.5.6 No Public Rights of Way would be obstructed by the development, although construction activities would need to be managed appropriately to ensure the continued safety of users. Taking all matters into account, officers are satisfied that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety, the convenience of highway users, or the operation of the local road network. Furthermore, the development would not give rise to a severe residual cumulative impact on the transport network and is therefore compliant with the relevant provisions of the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 6.6 **Ecology, Biodiversity, Ammonia and Habitats Regulations**
- 6.6.1 Core Strategy policies CS6 and CS17 seek to protect and enhance the diversity, high quality and local character of Shropshire's natural environment and to ensure no adverse impacts upon visual amenity, heritage and ecological assets. SAMDev Plan policies MD2 and MD12 require that developments enhance, incorporate or recreate natural assets. Policy MD12 states that proposals which are likely to have a significant adverse effect, directly, indirectly or cumulatively, on specified ecological assets should only be permitted if it can be clearly demonstrated that there is no satisfactory alternative; and the social or economic benefits of the proposal outweigh the harm to the asset.

- 6.6.2 The site comprises predominantly low-distinctiveness arable land together with sections of native hedgerow. The ecological assessment identifies potential for impacts upon nesting birds and foraging and commuting bats. The retention of mature trees, implementation of sensitive lighting design, seasonal vegetation clearance, provision of bat and bird boxes, skylark plots and additional landscape planting would avoid or mitigate residual ecological effects. These measures are secured through Conditions 7, 8, 10, 11, 14 and 15 of Appendix 1, together with the statutory biodiversity gain condition and the nesting-bird informative.
- 6.6.3 The biodiversity metric demonstrates an on-site gain of 1.90 habitat units, equivalent to 19.75%, together with a gain of 0.23 hedgerow units, equivalent to 22.92%. A Biodiversity Gain Plan will be required prior to commencement under the statutory biodiversity gain condition. The Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan will be secured via a separate pre-commencement condition, included as condition 10 within Appendix 1.
- 6.6.4 The April 2026 ammonia assessment predicts process contributions below 1% of the relevant critical level and critical load at the assessed SAC, Ramsar and SSSI receptors and accords with the requirements of Natural England guidance Air pollution and development: advice for local authorities. The Council Ecologist completed Stage 1 Habitats Regulations Assessment screening and concluded that the proposal would not be likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in combination, on Aqualate Mere Ramsar or Motte Meadows SAC. Appropriate Assessment is therefore not required.
- 6.6.5 At Millingtons Coppice and Coopers Coppice ancient woodlands, the April 2026 ammonia assessment predicts ammonia process contributions of $0.029 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ and $0.068 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ respectively, equivalent to 1.0% and 2.3% of the $3 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ critical level applied to these sites. Predicted nutrient nitrogen deposition is $0.228 \text{ kg N}/\text{ha}/\text{yr}$ at Millingtons Coppice and $0.530 \text{ kg N}/\text{ha}/\text{yr}$ at Coopers Coppice, equivalent to 2.3% and 5.3% respectively of the $10 \text{ kg N}/\text{ha}/\text{yr}$ lower critical load. Targeted lichen surveys found no nitrogen-sensitive lichen species of conservation concern, and the ammonia assessment therefore applies the higher $3 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ critical level to the ancient woodland receptors. The Council Ecologist concludes that the predicted increases would not adversely affect the species present and that no additional ammonia mitigation is necessary. Officers are therefore satisfied that the development would not result in the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland habitats.
- 6.6.6 The April 2026 Ammonia Assessments and March 2026 Lichen Survey are considered to constitute further information for the purposes of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. The requisite external publicity is therefore being undertaken in accordance with the Regulations, and the application will not be determined until the relevant

statutory publicity period has expired. Should additional material representations be received which would alter the recommendation, the application will be brought back for a committee determination.

6.7 Flood Risk, Drainage, Groundwater and Water Resources

6.7.1 Core Strategy policy CS18 seeks to reduce flood risk and avoid adverse impact on water quality and quantity. Policy CS6 requires that development safeguards natural resources, including soil and water.

6.7.2 The site lies within Flood Zone 1. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment identifies only a small area of shallow surface-water flooding risk within the northern part of the site. This would be addressed through raising finished floor levels to a minimum of 115.500 metres AOD and by directing exceedance flows away from buildings.

6.7.3 The drainage strategy proposes a sealed drainage network, filter drains and strips, attenuation features and a controlled discharge mechanism. The Lead Local Flood Authority raises no objection in principle but requires further infiltration testing, clarification of attenuation design, discharge arrangements and maintenance measures. Condition 6 will secure a detailed drainage scheme, including provision for the 1% annual exceedance event plus a 40% climate-change allowance together with appropriate pollution-control measures.

6.7.4 Representations have raised concerns regarding the source and volume of water required to serve the development and the potential effects of abstraction upon groundwater resources, watercourses, drinking-water supplies and ecological receptors. Further information has subsequently been submitted in the form of a water supply statement, which provides details regarding anticipated water demand and how this would be supplied. This is also subject to further publicity under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

6.7.5 The applicant proposes to meet the water demand through a combination of a private borehole within the site and a connection to the public mains water supply. The borehole would provide the primary supply, subject to the applicable abstraction controls (20 m³ per day), whilst the mains connection would provide top-up water where demand exceeds the quantity available from the borehole and would also provide a backup supply should the borehole be unavailable.

6.7.6 The submitted calculations indicate that the borehole could meet the development's entire demand during the first 14 days of the flock cycle and during the 10-day turnaround period. Between days 15 and 38, when water demand exceeds 20 m³ per day, the balance would be provided from the mains supply. On this basis, approximately 621 m³, or 68%, of the 917 m³ required during each cycle would be obtained from the borehole, with approximately 296 m³, or 32%, supplied from the mains.

6.7.7 The applicant has also indicated an intention to seek an abstraction licence from the Environment Agency to enable the whole site's water demand ultimately to be supplied from the borehole, with mains water retained as backup. The statement identifies that this would require abstraction of at least 45 m³ per day and acknowledges that, until such a licence is granted, abstraction would remain limited to the licence-exempt arrangement described above, with the mains supply meeting the balance of demand.

6.7.8 The submission therefore provides substantially greater certainty regarding the anticipated water requirements of the proposed development and identifies a means by which the development could be supplied without reliance upon licensed groundwater abstraction, through the proposed combined borehole and mains arrangement. Any future proposal to increase groundwater abstraction beyond the licence-exempt quantity would remain subject to the separate abstraction licensing regime. The applicant's statement records that the Environment Agency would assess the effects of such abstraction on groundwater and other water users when determining any future licence application.

6.7.9 On the basis of the further information submitted, officers are satisfied that a practicable water-supply strategy has been identified which does not depend upon the grant of a future abstraction licence in order for the development to operate. Nevertheless, given that the precise borehole location has yet to be fixed and the mains connection forms an important component of the proposed supply strategy, it is appropriate for a planning condition to be used to secure the final details of the water source and supply arrangements prior to the development becoming operational. This will ensure that the development is served by an adequate and lawful water supply consistent with the water-demand parameters assessed through the application.

6.8 **Manure, Waste Management and Indirect Effects**

6.8.1 Officers have had specific regard to *R (Squire) v Shropshire Council* [2019] EWCA Civ 888, which established the need for the EIA to address likely significant indirect effects arising from off-site manure management and cautioned against assuming that such effects are controlled by the Environmental Permit. Furthermore, in accordance with the approach established in *R (Caffyn) v Shropshire Council* [2025] EWHC 1497 (Admin), officers have considered the reasonably foreseeable downstream effects arising from the management of poultry manure.

6.8.2 Approximately 1,763 tonnes of manure would be produced annually by the development, containing approximately 58.2 tonnes of nitrogen and 12.3 tonnes of phosphate, and would be removed from the site following each flock for treatment at permitted anaerobic digestion facilities. The resulting digestate would subsequently be applied to agricultural land, with the nutrients retained

within the digestate providing a substitute for manufactured fertiliser.

- 6.8.3 The ES assesses the downstream effects of manure and digestate, including its subsequent use on agricultural land, whilst the climate change addendum to the ES considers the associated greenhouse-gas implications, renewable-energy generation and displacement of manufactured fertiliser. The absence of manure storage at the poultry unit also reduces emissions associated with on-site manure management. The ES also specifically assesses the potential amenity effects of digestate spreading, concluding that odour effects would be temporary, infrequent and not significant, whilst dust effects would be negligible given that digestate is principally applied as a liquid or slurry.
- 6.8.4 Officers recognise that land spreading of digestate has the potential to give rise to environmental effects and that such downstream consequences form part of the assessment of the development. Officers do not assume that the existence of alternative regulatory regimes is, of itself, sufficient to render impacts acceptable. The planning assessment has considered the nature of the impacts identified, the controls available under those regimes, consultee responses, and whether any residual planning harm has been demonstrated. Having regard to the information contained within the ES and the regulatory controls applicable to the subsequent management and spreading of digestate, officers are satisfied that these effects have been assessed at a proportionate level and do not give rise to a likely significant environmental effect.
- 6.8.5 To provide planning certainty of the proposed measures, Condition 16 will prohibit the storage or spreading of manure on site, require all manure to be transferred to a suitably authorised facility for treatment, and require records of quantities, carriers and destinations to be retained for inspection. Given that the off-site waste-management route forms part of the assessed development, these restrictions are considered necessary and reasonable. Subject to these controls, the indirect effects associated with manure management would not be significant.
- 6.9 **Trees, Heritage and Archaeology**
- 6.9.1 Core Strategy policies CS6 and CS17, together with SAMDev policies MD2 and MD12, seek to protect and enhance trees, woodland, landscape character and biodiversity, whilst Core Strategy Policy CS17 and SAMDev Policy MD13 require development to conserve and, where possible, enhance heritage assets and their settings, including archaeological interests.
- 6.9.2 The arboricultural assessment identifies 26 individual trees, four groups and two hedgerows. Two sections of hedgerow H1 and tree group G2 would require removal to facilitate access works. The Council's Tree Officer accepts these losses subject to appropriate mitigation, including replacement planting and compensation for mature trees and hedgerow losses associated with the proposed A5 junction works.

- 6.9.3 Conditions 7 and 8 secure implementation and retention of the approved tree-protection measures, while Condition 11 secures detailed replacement planting, including planting associated with the A5 junction improvement works, together with establishment and replacement requirements.
- 6.9.4 The Heritage Impact Assessment, together with the advice provided by the Council's Conservation Officer, concludes that separation distances and intervening vegetation would substantially limit intervisibility between the development and Sheriffhales Conservation Area, nearby listed buildings and Lilleshall Hall Registered Park and Garden. No heritage harm is identified, subject to implementation of the proposed landscape mitigation.
- 6.9.5 The site retains archaeological potential due to evidence of nearby prehistoric and Romano-British activity. Accordingly, Condition 9 requires a programme of archaeological investigation and monitoring to be undertaken prior to and during development.
- 6.10 **Climate Change**
- 6.10.1 The proposal would result in embodied and operational greenhouse-gas emissions associated with construction, energy use and transportation. An additional climate change chapter has been submitted as an addendum to the Environmental Statement, providing further assessment of construction and operational emissions, downstream effects, renewable energy, manure management, import substitution and climate resilience. Construction emissions are assessed as low and not significant, with mitigation including efficient plant, local sourcing of materials where practicable and reuse of excavated materials on site.
- 6.10.2 Operationally, all space heating would be provided by a 1,047 kW biomass boiler fuelled by woodchip from the applicant's holding rather than fossil fuel, with an indicative saving of 360–600 tonnes CO₂e per annum compared with LPG heating. No manure would be stored on site, with approximately 1,763 tonnes per annum removed to permitted anaerobic digestion facilities for renewable energy production, with the resulting digestate used as fertiliser. The applicant estimates a further saving of approximately 120–170 tonnes CO₂e per annum through displacement of manufactured fertiliser.
- 6.10.3 Representations referring to *R (Finch) v Surrey County Council [2024] UKSC 20* and wider emissions associated with feed production, transport, processing and packaging are noted. The Addendum addresses *Finch* and *R (Caffyn) v Shropshire Council [2025] EWHC 1497 (Admin)* and now considers wider supply-chain emissions through life-cycle data stated to include feed production, transport, processing and packaging. It also estimates that domestic production from the development could avoid approximately 4,400 tonnes CO₂e per annum through displacement of higher-carbon imported poultry. Officers consider that

- this import-substitution figure should be treated as indicative, as it depends upon assumptions regarding the extent to which production from the development would directly displace imports and their respective carbon intensities.
- 6.10.4 The Addendum also considers adaptation to climate change over the development's design life, including sustainable drainage incorporating climate-change allowances, controlled ventilation and cooling, water-supply resilience and landscape planting. The vulnerability of the development to climate change is assessed as low and not significant.
- 6.10.5 Overall, officers consider that the additional assessment provides sufficient information to reach a reasoned conclusion on the likely significant climate-change effects of the development. Whilst greenhouse-gas emissions would arise, identifiable mitigation is incorporated and no significant adverse climate-change effects are identified. The applicant's claimed wider carbon benefits, particularly those arising from import substitution, are afforded appropriate weight but are recognised as indicative rather than guaranteed outcomes. Climate-change considerations therefore do not weigh materially against the proposal.
- 6.11 **Cumulative, Downstream and In-Combination Effects**
- 6.11.1 Representations refer to *R (Caffyn) v Shropshire Council* [2025] EWHC 1497 (Admin) and argue that the Environmental Statement should assess the downstream effects of poultry manure following treatment at an anaerobic digestion facility, together with the cumulative effects arising from other intensive livestock developments. Officers have considered these matters as part of the environmental assessment rather than assuming that transfer to a separately regulated facility breaks the chain of causation.
- 6.11.2 The updated Environmental Statement identifies the quantity and characteristics of manure produced, its transfer to an authorised anaerobic digestion facility, the subsequent production of digestate and the potential pathways through which nutrients could affect surface water or groundwater receptors. The assessment concludes that significant effects are not predicted where digestate is used in accordance with applicable pollution-control regimes.
- 6.11.3 Condition 16 prohibits on-site storage or spreading, requires the transfer of manure in sealed or sheeted vehicles and requires retention of records documenting quantities, carriers and destinations.
- 6.11.4 The April 2026 ammonia assessment and the Council Ecologist's Habitats Regulations Assessment screening also consider relevant plans and projects, including environmental permitting information. The Council Ecologist concludes that no other relevant projects would contribute materially to the ammonia process contributions identified in respect of the European sites assessed.

- 6.11.5 Officers are therefore satisfied that cumulative, downstream and in-combination effects have been appropriately considered and that the Environmental Statement, together with the proposed conditions and regulatory controls, provides a sufficient basis for a reasoned conclusion.
- 6.12 **Other Material Considerations**
- 6.12.1 **Waste Management:** Reference has been made by objectors to *The National Farmers' Union v Herefordshire Council & Ors [2025] EWHC 536 (Admin)*. The judgment concerned the lawfulness of a policy within the Herefordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, including provisions requiring waste management information and, within specified SAC catchments, nutrient neutrality for livestock developments. The High Court dismissed the NFU's challenge and accepted that planning policy could legitimately address the environmental effects associated with agricultural waste and manure management, notwithstanding the existence of separate regulatory controls.
- 6.12.2 The judgment does not, however, establish that intensive poultry development is unacceptable in principle or that every poultry proposal must demonstrate nutrient neutrality; the relevance of manure management and potential water-quality effects remains dependent upon the development plan and the environmental circumstances of the individual proposal.
- 6.12.3 Accordingly, the judgment has been taken into account in determining the application, with the potential effects arising from poultry manure/litter and water quality considered on their site-specific merits alongside the submitted environmental information and consultation responses.
- 6.12.4 **Animal Welfare:** Representations raise concerns regarding stocking density, fast-growing breeds, lameness, mortality, the ability of birds to express natural behaviours and the potential need for flock culling. Animal welfare concerns are capable in law of being material planning considerations where they relate to the character or land-use consequences of development. *Animal Equality UK v North East Lincolnshire Borough Council [2025] EWHC 1331 (Admin)* confirms that decision-makers may take such matters into account where relevant but does not require animal-welfare concerns to determine the outcome of every planning application.
- 6.12.5 The concerns raised have been considered carefully. However, no site-specific evidence has been submitted demonstrating that the proposed development would be incapable of operating in compliance with the Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007, the Animal Welfare Act 2006 or other relevant legislation. Matters relating to husbandry, stocking densities, veterinary treatment and disease management are principally regulated through specialist statutory controls.
- 6.12.6 Whilst the concerns raised are a material consideration, officers do not consider

that the evidence demonstrates a distinct land-use impact sufficient to justify refusal of planning permission.

- 6.12.7 **Public Health, Antimicrobial Resistance and Biosecurity:** Representations raise concerns regarding antibiotic use, antimicrobial resistance, avian influenza, biosecurity, flock culling and wider public-health implications. The application does not specify any particular use of veterinary medicines, which would be prescribed and administered in accordance with separate legislation. No evidence has been provided demonstrating that the development, if operated lawfully, would result in measurable site-specific effects on antimicrobial resistance or unacceptable risks to neighbouring occupiers.
- 6.12.8 Similarly, concerns regarding avian influenza and pandemic risk are acknowledged. Such matters are regulated through statutory disease-surveillance, notification and biosecurity regimes administered by Defra and the Animal and Plant Health Agency. The proposed development incorporates controlled access arrangements, enclosed poultry housing, hardstanding and managed carcass-storage and collection facilities.
- 6.12.9 No statutory consultee has identified a site-specific disease-control objection to the proposal. In the absence of evidence demonstrating a material planning harm, limited weight is attached to these concerns.
- 6.12.10 **Wider Sustainability and Public Interest Considerations:** Representations raise concerns regarding particulate emissions, chronic disease, worker wellbeing, dietary policy, food-system sustainability and other broader ethical considerations associated with intensive livestock farming.
- 6.12.11 Officers have carefully considered the site-specific pathways through which the proposal could affect people and the environment, including odour, ammonia, noise, dust, bioaerosols, traffic and water pollution. Having regard to the submitted technical evidence, consultation responses and proposed mitigation measures, these impacts are considered capable of being controlled to an acceptable level.
- 6.12.12 The wider ethical and policy arguments advanced by objectors are acknowledged and have been taken into account. However, planning weight is attached to the planning relevance and evidential basis of the matters raised rather than to the number of representations received. Officers do not consider that the broader concerns identified outweigh the support afforded to the development through the Development Plan or alter the conclusion that unacceptable environmental effects have not been demonstrated.
- 6.12.13 Certain matters raised, particularly ethical objections to intensive poultry production, dietary choices and general opposition to the lawful consumption of poultry products, do not directly concern the land-use merits of the application.

6.13 Environmental Impact Assessment Reasoned Conclusion

- 6.13.1 The application is supported by an Environmental Statement submitted in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, as required for Schedule 1 development. The Environmental Statement, together with the further environmental information submitted during the determination of the application, has identified, described and assessed the likely significant effects of the development, including direct, indirect, cumulative and downstream effects.
- 6.13.2 The assessment identifies localised moderate adverse visual effects during the early years of the development, principally affecting users of Public Right of Way 0140/3/1 and the Model Flying Club, which would reduce as the proposed landscaping becomes established. Other assessed environmental effects are generally low or not significant, subject to the mitigation incorporated within the development. The principal mitigation relied upon includes the proposed landscape and habitat planting; tree protection and ecological measures; acoustic screening of the emergency ventilation fans; controlled external lighting; surface-water drainage and pollution-control measures; restrictions on bird numbers and growing cycles; transfer of poultry manure to a suitably permitted anaerobic digestion facility for treatment with no on-site storage or spreading; controls over the development's water supply and groundwater abstraction; improvements to the A5 access and restriction of HGV movements to the agreed A5 route; and archaeological investigation and monitoring. These measures are incorporated within the submitted scheme or secured through the conditions attached to the permission.
- 6.13.3 Having taken account of that mitigation, the residual effects include localised adverse landscape and visual effects, particularly during the early establishment period, but no unacceptable significant adverse environmental effects have been identified. The Local Planning Authority is therefore satisfied that sufficient environmental information is available to reach a reasoned conclusion on the significant effects of the development and that, subject to the identified mitigation and conditions, those effects do not warrant refusal of planning permission.

7.0 CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE

- 7.1 The proposal benefits from policy support in principle as agricultural development requiring a rural location, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS5, SAMDev Policy MD7b and the provisions of the NPPF 2026 supporting a productive and sustainable rural economy. The development would represent a significant investment in an established farming enterprise, contribute towards food production, support the agricultural sector and rural economy, provide employment opportunities, and deliver biodiversity net gain and landscape enhancements. These benefits attract substantial weight in favour of the

proposal.

- 7.2 Against these benefits, the proposal would result in some adverse landscape and visual effects, particularly during the early years before mitigation planting becomes fully established. However, these impacts are localised, would reduce over time and attract only limited weight against the development. The Environmental Statement, consultation responses and additional technical evidence demonstrate that impacts relating to residential amenity, highways, ecology, biodiversity, ammonia emissions, water resources, heritage, archaeology, flood risk, drainage and climate change can be appropriately mitigated and controlled through planning conditions and other regulatory regimes. No statutory consultee maintains an objection to the proposal.
- 7.3 Having regard to the Development Plan, the NPPF 2026, the Environmental Impact Assessment, consultation responses and all other material considerations, officers conclude that the proposal would not result in unacceptable environmental effects and that the identified adverse impacts do not outweigh the economic, agricultural and environmental benefits of the development. The proposal therefore represents sustainable development, accords with the Development Plan when read as a whole, and there are no material considerations which indicate that planning permission should be withheld. Approval is therefore recommended, subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1.

8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES APPRAISAL

- 8.1 Risk management
The principal risks are an appeal against refusal or conditions, a third-party judicial review, and an appeal against non-determination. The recommendation is based on the development plan, the Environmental Statement, consultee advice and the evidence before the authority. Clear reasons and enforceable conditions reduce the decision-making risk.
- 8.2 Human Rights
Article 8 and First Protocol Article 1 have been taken into account. The rights of the applicant and landowner have been balanced against the amenity and property interests of neighbouring occupiers and the wider public interest.
- 8.3 Equalities
No evidence indicates that the proposal would cause unlawful discrimination. Equality considerations have been included in the overall assessment under section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There may be financial implications if the decision or any condition is challenged

by appeal or judicial review. The cost and resource implications would depend on the form and complexity of any challenge.

10.0 Artificial Intelligence

AI can be used to support our work and to create content by bringing together or summarising responses to consultation. The report writer remains responsible for ensuring that the content of the report is factually accurate and that the use of AI is responsible and lawful. All original documents remain unaltered on the planning register should you wish to view them in full.

11.0 Background

Relevant Planning Policies

Central Government Guidance:
NPPF

Core Strategy and Saved Policies:
CS5 - Countryside and Greenbelt
CS6 - Sustainable Design and Development Principles
CS13 - Economic Development, Enterprise and Employment
CS17 - Environmental Networks
CS18 - Sustainable Water Management
MD2 - Sustainable Design
MD7b - General Management of Development in the Countryside
MD8 - Infrastructure Provision
MD12 - Natural Environment
MD13 - Historic Environment

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

PREAPP/18/00212 Relocation of existing pig farm to new site and redevelopment of existing site for residential purposes. PREAMD 19th July 2019

20/00820/FUL Formation (relocation) of pig farm including erection of two pig rearing buildings, two straw storage buildings, one hospital/lairage building, one workshop/machinery storage building and one bio-security building; with all associated works GRANT 7th July 2023

PREAPP/24/00046 Erection of four poultry units to house up to 200,000 broiler birds per cycle. PREAMD 25th March 2024

24/01429/SCO The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 request for scoping opinion - erection of four poultry units to house up to 200,000 broiler birds per cycle. SCO 30th May 2024

12.0 Additional Information

View details online: <http://pa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SUTOTXTDHCX00>

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) - Councillor David Walker
Local Member Cllr Elizabeth Barker
Appendices APPENDIX 1 – Conditions APPENDIX 2 – HRA screening

APPENDIX 1

Conditions

STANDARD CONDITIONS

Time limit

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 (As amended).

Approved plans

2. The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved plans, drawings and documents.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details.

Maximum bird numbers

3. The four poultry units hereby permitted shall accommodate no more than 160,000 birds in total at any one time.

Reason: To ensure that the restriction on the maximum number of birds to be kept in the buildings at any one time can be satisfactorily enforced, in order to prevent adverse impact on biodiversity from ammonia emissions consistent with the Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan Policy MD12 and the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Number of growing cycles

4. (a) There shall be no more than 8 bird growing cycles per calendar year.
(b) Records of the start and finish date of each growing cycle shall be made and shall be made available to the local planning authority on request.

Reason: To ensure that the number of bird growing cycles does not increase significantly over that proposed in order to limit the potential for adverse impacts due to odour and ammonia emissions.

CONDITIONS REQUIRING APPROVAL BEFORE DEVELOPMENT COMMENCES

Highway access works

5. No development shall take place until a scheme for access improvement works to the A5 junction in general accordance with plan SA29727_H_02, including the layout, construction, sightlines and any landscaping works have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The agreed details shall be fully implemented before the use hereby approved is commenced.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory means of access to the highway, in the interests of highway safety and visual amenity.

Surface and foul drainage

6. No development shall commence until a final surface-water and foul/dirty-water drainage scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include BRE365 infiltration testing and groundwater levels; justification of the disposal hierarchy; design for the 1% annual exceedance event plus 40% climate change; attenuation and discharge rates; outfall and headwall details; pollution-control treatment; finished floor levels; exceedance routing; construction phasing; and a maintenance and inspection plan. The approved scheme shall be completed before first use and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To secure satisfactory drainage, protect groundwater and prevent increased flood or pollution risk.

Arboricultural matters

7. All pre-commencement tree works and tree protection measures as detailed in Section 2 and Appendix 3 (2058.TPP Rev 1) of the Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan (2058.AMS, Quants Environmental, February 2025) shall be fully implemented before any development-related equipment, materials or machinery are brought onto the site. Photographic evidence to demonstrate installation of the approved tree protection measures shall be submitted to the written approval of the LPA, prior to commencement of development.

Reason: to safeguard the amenities of the local area and to protect the natural features that contribute towards this and that are important to the appearance of the development.

8. The development shall be implemented in accordance with Section 2 and Appendix 3 (2058.TPP Rev 1) of the Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan (2058.AMS, Quants Environmental, February 2025). The approved tree protection measures shall be maintained in a satisfactory condition throughout the duration of the development, until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site.

Reason: to safeguard the amenities of the local area and to protect the natural features that contribute towards this and that are important to the appearance of the development.

Archaeology

9. (a) No development approved by this permission shall commence until a written scheme of investigation for a programme of archaeological work has been submitted to and approved by the local Planning Authority in writing.
9. (b) The approved programme of archaeological work set out in the written scheme of investigation shall be implemented in full and a report detailing the results of the archaeological work must be provided to the local planning authority prior to first use or occupancy of the development.

Reason: The site is known to hold archaeological interest.

Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

10. The development shall not commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan prepared in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan and including:
- a) A non-technical summary;
 - b) The roles and responsibilities of people or organisation(s) delivering the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan;
 - c) The planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan;
 - d) The management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of development and
 - e) The monitoring method and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the local planning authority
 - f) Schedules of plants/seed mixes, noting species (including scientific names), planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;
 - g) Implementation timetables

Reason: In order to comply with the requirements of Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024.

Landscaping

11. (a) No works associated with the development will commence and no equipment, machinery or materials will be brought onto the site for the purposes of said development until a landscaping scheme, prepared in accordance with British Standard 8545: 2014 Trees: from Nursery to Independence in the Landscape ' Recommendations, or its current version, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall include details as relevant of ground preparation, planting pit specification and the trees and shrubs to be planted in association with the development (including species, locations or density and planting pattern, type of planting stock and size at planting), means of protection and support and measures for post-planting maintenance, both within site and around the improvement works at the junction with the A5.
11. (b) The approved landscaping scheme shall be implemented as specified and completed prior to first use of the development for its intended purpose, or otherwise in accordance with a phased programme of delivery to the written approval of the LPA. If within a period of five years from the date of planting, any tree or shrub, or any tree or shrub planted in replacement for it, dies or, in the opinion of the LPA becomes seriously damaged or diseased, or is otherwise lost or destroyed, another tree or shrub of a similar specification to the original shall be planted at the same place during the first available planting season.

Reason: to ensure satisfactory tree and shrub planting as appropriate to enhance the appearance of the development and its integration into the surrounding area.

CONDITIONS REQUIRING APPROVAL BEFORE FIRST USE

Acoustic barrier

12. Prior to the first operational use of the development hereby permitted, details of an acoustic barrier serving the emergency gable-end ventilation fans shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall include the location, alignment, height, length, construction, materials and acoustic performance of the barrier and shall demonstrate that it will obstruct the direct line of sight between the emergency gable fans and the noise-sensitive residential receptors assessed in the submitted Noise Impact Assessment. Unless otherwise demonstrated through an acoustic assessment and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the barrier shall have a minimum height of 2.8 metres. The acoustic barrier shall be installed in accordance with the approved details prior to the first operational use of the poultry houses and shall thereafter be retained and maintained in an effective condition for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To protect residential amenity during operation of emergency gable fans.

Water supply and efficiency

13. Prior to the first operational use of the development, a detailed water supply scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:
- a) details of the location and specification of the proposed borehole and the means of abstraction;
 - b) confirmation of the connection to the public mains water supply and its availability to provide the required supplementary and backup water supply;
 - c) details of the arrangements for controlling and monitoring abstraction from the borehole, including metering;
 - d) confirmation of whether an abstraction licence or other regulatory consent is required and, where required, evidence that the relevant licence or consent has been obtained; and
 - e) details of water-efficiency measures and the arrangements for monitoring water consumption.

The approved water supply scheme shall be fully implemented and operational prior to the first operational use of the development and shall thereafter be maintained for the lifetime of the development. Unless otherwise authorised by an abstraction licence granted by the Environment Agency, abstraction from the borehole shall not exceed 20 cubic metres in any period of 24 hours, with water demand exceeding this quantity being met from the mains water supply.

Reason: To ensure that the development is provided with an adequate and lawful water supply, to ensure that groundwater abstraction is appropriately controlled, and to safeguard water resources and other water-dependent receptors.

Ecological enhancements

14. Prior to first operational use of the buildings, details of the following roosting and nesting opportunities shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
- A minimum of 2 external woodcrete bat boxes, suitable for nursery or summer roosting for small crevice dwelling bat species.
 - A minimum of 4 artificial nest boxes, suitable for a range of species, such as tit species (26mm or 32mm hole, standard design), robins and blackbirds (open-fronted) and wrens (wren-specific).
 - A minimum of 2 skylark nesting plots within the larger area of modified grassland to the north of the buildings. These should measure 16 - 24m² and be positioned away from field edges and tramlines.
- The roosting and nesting opportunities shall be sited in appropriate locations, with a clear flight path and where they will be unaffected by artificial lighting and provided in accordance with the agreed details prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted. Roosting and nesting opportunities shall thereafter be maintained for the lifetime of the development.
- Reason: To ensure the provision of roosting and nesting opportunities.

External lighting

15. Prior to the erection of any external lighting on the site, a lighting plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The lighting plan shall demonstrate that the proposed lighting will not impact upon ecological networks and/or sensitive features, e.g. bat and bird boxes (required under a separate planning condition). The submitted scheme shall be designed to take into account the advice on lighting set out in the Bat Conservation Trust's Guidance Note GN08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting At Night, GN01/21: The Reduction of Obtrusive Light and Guidance Note 9/19: Domestic exterior lighting: getting it right. The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained for the lifetime of the development.
- Reason: To minimise disturbance to bats, which are European Protected Species.

CONDITIONS FOR THE LIFETIME OF THE DEVELOPMENT

Manure and dirty water management

16. No poultry manure shall be stored or spread on the application site. All manure shall be loaded directly into sealed or fully sheeted vehicles and transferred for treatment to an anaerobic digestion facility holding an Environmental Permit authorising the receipt and treatment of the manure. Dirty wash-water shall be held in sealed tanks and removed by a licensed carrier to an authorised treatment facility. Records of quantities, dates, carriers and destinations shall be retained for five years and provided to the Local Planning Authority on request.
- Reason: To ensure the waste route assessed in the EIA is followed and to protect amenity and the water environment.

HGV routing

17. All Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) associated with the construction, operation and maintenance of the development shall access and egress the site solely via the A5 to the south of the site. No HGV associated with the development shall travel to or from the site via the U6338 or the B4379 through the settlement of Sheriffhales.

Reason: To protect residential amenity and highway safety within Sheriffhales and to ensure that HGV traffic associated with the development utilises the most appropriate routes within the local highway network in accordance with the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework

HGV ROUTING INFORMATIVE

Appropriate measures to ensure compliance with the approved routing strategy could include driver instructions, signage and contractual arrangements with contractors, suppliers and operators and the Local Planning Authority encourages the developer/operator to utilise some/all of these measures over the lifetime of the scheme.

NESTING BIRDS INFORMATIVE

The active nests of all wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). An active nest is one being built, contains eggs or chicks, or on which fledged chicks are still dependent.

It is a criminal offence to kill, injure or take any wild bird; to take, damage or destroy an active nest; and to take or destroy an egg. There is an unlimited fine and/or up to six months imprisonment for such offences.

All vegetation clearance, tree removal and/or scrub removal should be carried out outside of the bird nesting season which runs from March to August inclusive.

If it is necessary for work to commence in the nesting season then a pre-commencement inspection of the vegetation for active bird nests should be carried out. If vegetation cannot be clearly seen to be clear of nests then an appropriately qualified and experienced ecologist should be called in to carry out the check. No clearance works can take place with 5m of an active nest.

If during construction birds gain access to any of the buildings and begin nesting, work must cease until the young birds have fledged.

GENERAL SITE INFORMATIVE FOR WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Widespread reptiles (adder, slow worm, common lizard and grass snake) are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) from killing, injury and trade. Widespread amphibians (common toad, common frog, smooth newt and palmate newt) are protected from trade. The European hedgehog is a Species of Principal Importance under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Reasonable precautions should be taken during works to ensure that these species are not harmed.

The following procedures should be adopted to reduce the chance of killing or injuring small animals, including reptiles, amphibians and hedgehogs.

If piles of rubble, logs, bricks, other loose materials or other potential refuges are to be disturbed, this should be done by hand and carried out during the active season (March to October) when the weather is warm.

Areas of long and overgrown vegetation should be removed in stages. Vegetation should first be strimmed to a height of approximately 15cm and then left for 24 hours to allow any animals to move away from the area. Arisings should then be removed from the site or placed in habitat piles in suitable locations around the site. The vegetation can then be strimmed down to a height of 5cm and then cut down further or removed as required. Vegetation removal should be done in one direction, towards remaining vegetated areas (hedgerows etc.) to avoid trapping wildlife.

The grassland should be kept short prior to and during construction to avoid creating attractive habitats for wildlife.

All building materials, rubble, bricks and soil must be stored off the ground, e.g. on pallets, in skips or in other suitable containers, to prevent their use as refuges by wildlife.

Where possible, trenches should be excavated and closed in the same day to prevent any wildlife becoming trapped. If it is necessary to leave a trench open overnight then it should be sealed with a close-fitting plywood cover or a means of escape should be provided in the form of a shallow sloping earth ramp, sloped board or plank. Any open pipework should be capped overnight. All open trenches and pipework should be inspected at the start of each working day to ensure no animal is trapped.

Any common reptiles or amphibians discovered should be allowed to naturally disperse. Advice should be sought from an appropriately qualified and experienced ecologist if large numbers of common reptiles or amphibians are present.

If a great crested newt is discovered at any stage then all work must immediately halt and an appropriately qualified and experienced ecologist and Natural England (0300

060 3900) should be contacted for advice. The Local Planning Authority should also be informed.

If a hibernating hedgehog is found on the site, it should be covered over with a cardboard box and advice sought from an appropriately qualified and experienced ecologist or the British Hedgehog Preservation Society (01584 890 801).

APPENDIX 2

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

1.0 Introduction

The proposal described below has the potential to adversely affect a designated site of international importance for nature conservation. The likelihood and significance of these potential effects must be investigated.

This HRA is required by Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), before the council, as the 'competent authority' under the Regulations, can grant planning permission for the project. In accordance with Government policy, the assessment is also made in relation to sites listed under the 1971 Ramsar convention.

Date of completion for the HRA screening / Appropriate Assessment matrix:

28th September 2026

HRA completed by:

Sophie Milburn Planning Ecologist

2.0 HRA Stage 1 – Screening

This stage of the process aims to identify the likely impacts of a project upon an international site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, and to consider if the impacts are likely to be significant. Following recent case law (*People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17*), any proposed mitigation measures to avoid or reduce adverse impacts are not taken into account in Stage 1. If such measures are required, then they will be considered in stage 2, Appropriate Assessment.

2.1 Summary Table 1: Details of project

Project details	25/01501/EIA
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Name and description of Natura 2000 sites	Aqualate Mere Midland Meres and Mosses Ramsar Phase 2 (241.00ha) is the largest of the meres with the most extensive reedswamp community. The mere and its surrounds form a complex of open water, fen, grassland and woodland. The site has nationally important numbers of breeding herons <i>Ardea cinerea</i> and passage shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i> and is regionally significant for breeding waders. It is included within the Ramsar Phase for its Open Water, Swamp, Fen, Wet Pasture and Carr habitats with an invertebrate assemblage. Mottey Meadows represents lowland hay meadows in the English Midlands, and holds a relatively large area of the habitat (approximately 40 ha). The site contains grassland with limited influence of agricultural intensification and so demonstrates good conservation of structure and function. There are transitions to other dry and wet grassland types. The site is important for a range of rare meadow species, including fritillary <i>Fritillaria meleagris</i> at its most northerly native locality. Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site • Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>)
Description of the project and potential pathways of impact	Proposed Poultry Farm South West Of Manor Farm, Sheriffhales, Shropshire – Erection of a poultry farm including 4no linked poultry houses with linked amenity building and associated concrete apron, feed bins, feed blending room, dead bird shed, dirty water tanks, biomass boiler house, hardstanding yard area and drainage attenuation pond Potential effect pathway of ammonia emissions and nitrogen deposition
Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)?	No

2.2 Screening for likelihood of significant effects on European Sites

For the designated sites within the relevant screening distances, the Ammonia Emissions: Impact Assessment (Isopleth, April 2026) has calculated that the proposed development will result in the following process contributions towards the critical level of ammonia and the critical level of nitrogen:

Site and designation	Distance from site	%age PC of CLe	%age PC of CLo
Aqualate Mere Ramsar (part of Midland Meres & Mosses Phase 2)	8.4km	0.5%	0.4%
Mottey Meadows SAC	8.9km	0.2%	0.3%

PC = Process Contribution

CLe = Critical Level of ammonia

CLo = Critical Load of nitrogen

There are no other projects that will contribute in-combination to the development's process contributions of ammonia and nitrogen.

The contributions are <1% of the CLe and CLo, therefore, in line with Natural England's guidance, it can be concluded that the proposal will not result in any likely significant effects on Aqualate Mere Ramsar (part of Midland Meres & Mosses Phase 2) or Mottey Meadows SAC.

2.3 Summary of Stage 1 screening

Stage 1 screening concludes that the proposal will not result in any likely significant effects on Aqualate Mere Ramsar (part of Midland Meres & Mosses Phase 2) or Mottey Meadows SAC.

Stage 2 (Appropriate Assessment) is therefore not required.

3.0 Final conclusions

Following Stage 1 screening, Shropshire Council concluded that the proposed development will not result in any likely significant effects on Aqualate Mere Ramsar (part of Midland Meres & Mosses Phase 2) or Mottey Meadows SAC.

Appendix 3 Guidance on completing the HRA Screening Matrix

The Habitats Regulations Assessment process

Essentially, there are two 'tests' incorporated into the procedures of Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, one known as the 'significance test' and the other known as the 'integrity test'. If, taking into account scientific data, we conclude there will be no likely significant effect on the European Site from the development, the 'integrity test' need not be considered. However, if significant

effects cannot be counted out, then the Integrity Test must be researched. A competent authority (such as a Local Planning Authority) may legally grant a permission only if both tests can be passed.

The first test (the significance test) is addressed by Regulation 63, part 1:

63. (1) A competent authority, before deciding to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for a plan or project which –

(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and

(b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of that site, must make an appropriate assessment of the implications for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives.

The second test (the integrity test) is addressed by Regulation 63, part 5:

63. (5) In light of the conclusions of the assessment, and subject to regulation 64 (consideration of overriding public interest), the competent authority may agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site or the European offshore marine site (as the case may be).

In this context 'likely' means "if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that it will have a significant effect on the site", or "it may happen", not merely that it is a fanciful possibility. 'Significant' means not trivial or inconsequential but an effect that is noteworthy – *Natural England guidance on The Habitat Regulation Assessment of Local Development Documents (Revised Draft 2009)*.

63. (6) In considering whether a project will adversely affect the integrity of the site, the authority must have regard to the manner in which it is proposed to be carried out or to any conditions or restrictions subject to which they propose that the consent, permission or other authorisation should be given.

Habitats Regulations Assessment Outcomes

A Local Planning Authority can only legally grant planning permission if it is established that the proposed plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the European Site.

If it is not possible to establish this beyond reasonable scientific doubt then planning permission cannot legally be granted unless it is satisfied that, there being no alternative solutions, the project must be carried out for imperative reasons of over-riding public interest, and the Secretary of State has been notified in accordance with section 64 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The latter measure is only to be used in extreme cases and with full justification and compensation measures, which must be reported to the European Commission.

Duty of the Local Planning Authority

It is the duty of the planning case officer, the committee considering the application and the Local Planning Authority as a whole to fully engage with the Habitats Regulations Assessment process, to have regard to the response of Natural England and to

determine, beyond reasonable scientific doubt, the outcome of the 'significance' test and the 'integrity' test before making a planning decision.