

# Permitting decisions

## Surrender

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We have decided to accept the surrender of the permit for Northcott Farm Poultry Unit operated by P.D. Hook (Breeders) Limited & P.D. Hook (Rearing) Limited.

The permit number is EPR/BP3638RX.

We are satisfied that the necessary measures have been taken to avoid any pollution risk and to return the site to a satisfactory state. We consider in reaching that decision we have taken into account all relevant considerations and legal requirements.

### Purpose of this document

This decision document provides a record of the decision making process. It summarises the decision making process in the decision checklist to show how all relevant factors have been taken in to account.

This decision document provides a record of the decision making process. It:

- highlights key issues in the determination
- summarises the decision making process in the [decision checklist](#) to show how all relevant factors have been taken into account

Unless the decision document specifies otherwise we have accepted the applicant's proposals.

### Key issues of the decision

#### Reason for surrender

The installation has been a poultry farm throughout the life of the permit with a current capacity at the part of site named Northcott A for 33,000 broiler breeder layers places and 36,000 pullet places at Northcott B.

A reduction in numbers and changes to breed types at Northcott Poultry Unit will result in the farm having less than 40,000 places and therefore no longer meets the threshold for regulation under the Environmental Permitting Regulations. Rearing pullets will no longer be placed at Northcott B and the poultry places across the installation for both Northcott A and Northcott B will be 36,000 breeder layers following a re-development scheme at the site.

#### Pollution Risk

Throughout the life of the permit the site has maintained a sealed drainage system. Washwater tanks and fuel stores were bunded. Loading of livestock trailers and trailers recovering spent litter will continue to be loaded on concrete hardstanding with drainage connections to the clean down tanks.

The operator has confirmed that there have been no pollution incidents which would may have impacted on land or that represent an ongoing risk to the land (spills for example).

All raw materials have been removed from Northcott B which will undergo redevelopment.

### **Satisfactory state**

Northcott B was removed from production and closed pending redevelopment in October 2017. The following activities were associated with this decommissioning:

- Raw materials removed from site.
- Fuel stores emptied with relevant waste disposal documentation available for inspection.
- Site standby generator isolated from the mains.
- LPG vessels emptied and disconnected from farm infrastructure and tanks removed.
- All drainage systems flushed with clean water to the collection tanks.
- Dirty water collection tanks emptied and flushed.

Fuel storage tanks will remain on site to be used for the farm's continuing operations.

Northcott A continues to operate but no longer meets the threshold for regulation.

### **Site inspection**

The Environment Agency attended a surrender meeting and inspection at Northcott Farm Poultry Unit, and confirmed the details outlined above. The Environment Agency have no objection to the permit being surrendered.

### **Conclusion**

Based on our consideration of the application to surrender the permit, the Environment Agency is satisfied that the necessary measures to avoid pollution during the operation of the regulated facility were undertaken and that all potential polluting activities associated with the regulated operations have been removed where appropriate. The Environment Agency therefore concludes that pollution risk has been removed where required and that the measures put in place by the operator during the life of the permit have protected the site from deterioration.

## Decision checklist

Aspect considered	Decision
<b>Receipt of application</b>	
Confidential information	A claim for commercial or industrial confidentiality has not been made.
Identifying confidential information	We have not identified information provided as part of the application that we consider to be confidential.
<b>The site</b>	
Pollution risk	We are satisfied that the necessary measures have been taken to avoid a pollution risk resulting from the operation of the regulated facility.
Satisfactory state	<p>We are satisfied that the necessary measures have been taken to return the site of the regulated facility to a satisfactory state.</p> <p>In coming to this decision we have had regard to the state of the site before the facility was put into operation.</p>
<b>Growth Duty</b>	
Section 108 Deregulation Act 2015 – Growth duty	<p>We have considered our duty to have regard to the desirability of promoting economic growth set out in section 108(1) of the Deregulation Act 2015 and the guidance issued under section 110 of that Act in deciding whether to grant this permit surrender.</p> <p>Paragraph 1.3 of the guidance says:</p> <p>“The primary role of regulators, in delivering regulation, is to achieve the regulatory outcomes for which they are responsible. For a number of regulators, these regulatory outcomes include an explicit reference to development or growth. The growth duty establishes economic growth as a factor that all specified regulators should have regard to, alongside the delivery of the protections set out in the relevant legislation.”</p> <p>We have addressed the legislative requirements and environmental standards to be set for this operation in the body of the decision document above. The guidance is clear at paragraph 1.5 that the growth duty does not legitimise non-compliance and its purpose is not to achieve or pursue economic growth at the expense of necessary protections.</p>