

Mr Steven Kilmartin
Laci Land Restoration Ltd

Our ref: EA/EPR/HB3900TY
Complaint ref: NAT/NPS/15557
Date: 3 May 2022

By email only

Dear Mr Kilmartin,

Response to Your Complaint Ref NAT/NPS/15557

Thank you for your email to the Environment Agency Chief Executive, James Bevan, dated 21 April 2022. James Bevan has read your email and has asked me to respond. I am sorry that you have had a poor experience when trying to contact us by telephone to find out what is happening for your environmental permit application for Sweethayes Farm.

The proposal is to build a platform for a barn using waste materials, which is termed a Recovery versus Disposal (RvD) activity. An important part of the application process is to demonstrate that the proposal is a recovery activity through a Waste Recovery Plan (WRP). We received your WRP in early September 2021 and I can see that there were requests for further information made by the Environment Agency before it could be concluded that it was a recovery activity in January 2022. This isn't unusual for WRP assessment, but unfortunately does slow down the process.

Your permit application was received 10 February 2022 and deemed complete 9 March 2022. Your application is placed on a queue, waiting for a permitting officer to become available to determine the application. Our approach is that we take the applications that have been waiting longest first. I am sorry to have to tell you that there are 40 RvD applications that have been waiting longer than yours. I regret that I cannot give you a date when your application will be allocated to an officer for determination.

I acknowledge that this does appear to be a drawn-out process. I can assure you that we are following the guidance and processes to ensure that we are fulfilling our statutory duties. We have recently introduced measures to improve how we process applications for RvD and there is a dedicated team on these types of applications. It is expected that we can determine the applications faster and get round to yours sooner. Once allocated to an officer we aim to complete the determination and issue the permit within 12 weeks.

The pandemic was an issue for the permitting process; however we have remained operational throughout and are now addressing the backlog of applications which has incrementally built up. I regret that this means that there are delays for applicants and the impact that this has on your project.

A Permitting Manager will keep the progress of your application under review and will keep you updated.

Yours sincerely,

MARK MALEHAM

Permitting Manager

National Permitting Service, Part of Operations – Regulation, Monitoring and Customer