Permitting Decisions - Bespoke Permit

We have decided to grant the permit for Fir Tree Farm operated by Bailey Livestock Limited.

The permit number is EPR/KP3426SG.

We consider in reaching that decision we have taken into account all relevant considerations and legal requirements and that the permit will ensure that the appropriate level of environmental protection is provided.

The installation comprises two pig units; the northern unit contains pig house 1 and the southern unit contains pig house 2. The site operates as a finisher unit, and the two pig units provide a combined capacity for 2,600 production pigs (pigs > 30kg) in the two pig houses. We have determined these two existing under threshold farms as a single installation above the relevant 2,000 production pigs threshold requiring an Environmental Permitting Regulations (EPR) permit. Pig house 1 (northern unit) has natural ventilation and pig house 2 (southern unit) has capped ridge roof fan ventilation. All pigs are kept on a solid floor with straw bedding.

Purpose of this document

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 considerations section to show how the main relevant factors have been taken into account
- shows how we have considered the consultation responses

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

Read the permitting decisions in conjunction with the environmental permit. The introductory note summarises what the permit covers.

Key issues of the decision

Intensive Rearing of Poultry or Pigs BAT Conclusions document

The Best Available Techniques (BAT) Reference document (BREF) for the Intensive Rearing of Poultry or Pigs (IRPP) was published on 21st February 2017. There is a separate BAT Conclusions document which sets out the standards that permitted farms have to meet.

All new installation farming permits issued after 21st February 2017 must be compliant in full from the first day of operation.

There are some additional requirements for permit holders. The BAT Conclusions include BAT-Associated Emission Levels (BAT-AELs) for ammonia emissions, which will apply to the majority of permits, as well as BAT-AELs for nitrogen and phosphorus excretion.

For some types of rearing practices, stricter standards apply to farms and housing permitted after the BAT Conclusions were published.

BAT Conclusions review

There are 34 BAT Conclusion measures in total within the BAT Conclusion document dated 21st February 2017.

The Applicant has confirmed their compliance with all BAT conditions for the new installation in their document reference 'BAT conclusions' and dated 24/02/2026, which has been referenced in Table S1.2 - Operating Techniques, of the permit.

The following is a more specific review of the measures the Applicant has applied to ensure compliance with the above key BAT measures:

BAT 3 Nutritional management - Nitrogen excretion

The Applicant has confirmed it will demonstrate that the installation can achieve levels of nitrogen excretion below the required BAT-AEL of 13 kg N/animal place/year and will use BAT 3a technique reducing the crude protein content.

BAT 4 Nutritional management - Phosphorus excretion

The Applicant has confirmed it will demonstrate that the installation can achieve levels of phosphorus excretion below the required BAT-AEL of 5.4 kg P_2O_5/animal place/year and will use BAT 4a technique reducing the crude protein content.

BAT 24 Monitoring of emissions and process parameters - Total nitrogen and phosphorus excretion

Table S3.3 of the permit concerning process monitoring requires the Operator to undertake relevant monitoring that complies with these BAT Conclusions.

This will be verified by means of manure analysis and reported annually.

BAT 25 Monitoring of emissions and process parameters – Ammonia emissions

Table S3.3 of the permit concerning process monitoring requires the Operator to undertake relevant monitoring that complies with these BAT Conclusions.

The Applicant has confirmed they will report the ammonia emissions to the Environment Agency annually by utilising estimation by using emission factors.

BAT 26 Monitoring of emissions and process parameters - Odour emissions

The approved odour management plan (OMP) includes the following details for on farm monitoring and continual improvement:

• The staff will perform a daily boundary walk to check the surrounding area for high levels of odour. Checks will also be performed on the surrounding area by persons who do not regularly work on the farm.

• Visual (and nasal) inspections of potentially odorous activities will be carried out. The Operator lives in the neighbouring property, and the Operators or their delegates manage the pigs day to day, so they are able and responsible for checking odour emissions daily, checking for any abnormal levels or potential for increased odour production.

• In the event of odour complaints being received the Operator will notify the Environment Agency and make a record of the complaint. The Operator will undertake the necessary odour contingency as required.

BAT 27 Monitoring of emissions and process parameters - Dust emissions

Table S3.3 of the permit concerning process monitoring requires the Operator to undertake relevant monitoring that complies with these BAT Conclusions.

The Applicant has confirmed they will report the dust emissions to the Environment Agency annually by utilising estimation by using emission factors.

BAT 30 Ammonia emissions from pig houses

The Applicant has confirmed it will demonstrate that the installation achieves levels of ammonia below the required BAT-AEL for Pigs > 30kg (solid floor straw system: 5.65 kg NH_3/animal place/year.

Detailed assessment of specific BAT measures

Ammonia emission controls – BAT Conclusion 30 (pigs)

A BAT Associated Emission Level (AEL) provides us with a performance benchmark to determine whether an activity is BAT. The BAT Conclusions include a set of BAT-AELs for ammonia emissions to air from animal housing for pigs.

All new bespoke applications issued after 21st February 2017, including those where there is a mixture of old and new housing, will now need to meet the BAT-AEL.

The emission factor of 1.888 kg NH_3/animal place/year is below the BAT-AEL so this site will comply.

Industrial Emissions Directive (IED)

This permit implements the requirements of the European Union Directive on Industrial Emissions.

Groundwater and soil monitoring

As a result of the requirements of the Industrial Emissions Directive, all permits are now required to contain a condition relating to protection of soil, groundwater and groundwater monitoring. However, the Environment Agency's H5 Guidance states that it is only necessary for the Operator to take samples of soil or groundwater and measure levels of contamination where there is evidence that there is, or could be existing contamination and:

- The environmental risk assessment has identified that the same contaminants are a particular hazard; or
- The environmental risk assessment has identified that the same contaminants are a hazard and the risk assessment has identified a possible pathway to land or groundwater.

H5 Guidance further states that it is **not essential for the Operator** to take samples of soil or groundwater and measure levels of contamination where:

- The environmental risk assessment identifies no hazards to land or groundwater; or
- Where the environmental risk assessment identifies only limited hazards to land and groundwater and there is no reason to believe that there could be historic contamination by those substances that present the hazard; or
- Where the environmental risk assessment identifies hazards to land and groundwater but there is evidence that there is no historic contamination by those substances that pose the hazard.

The site condition report (SCR) for Fir Tree Farm, received 24/02/2026, demonstrates that there are no hazards or likely pathway to land or groundwater and no historic contamination on site that may present a hazard from the same contaminants. Therefore, on the basis of the risk assessment presented in the SCR, we accept that they have not provided base line reference data for the soil and groundwater at the site at this stage and although condition 3.1.3 is included in the permit no groundwater monitoring will be required.

Odour management

Intensive farming is by its nature a potentially odorous activity. This is recognised in our 'How to Comply with your Environmental Permit for Intensive Farming' EPR 6.09 guidance.

Condition 3.3 of the environmental permit reads as follows:

"Emissions from the activities shall be free from odour at levels likely to cause pollution outside the site, as perceived by an authorised officer of the Environment Agency, unless the Operator has used appropriate measures, including, but not limited to, those specified in any approved odour management plan, to prevent or where that is not practicable to minimise the odour."

Under section 3.3 of the guidance, an Odour Management Plan (OMP) is required to be approved as part of the permitting process if, as is the case here, sensitive receptors (sensitive receptors in this instance excludes properties associated with the farm) are within 400m of the installation boundary. It is appropriate to require an OMP when such sensitive receptors have been identified within 400m of the installation to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to minimise the risk of pollution from odour emissions.

The risk assessment for the installation provided with the application lists key potential risks of odour pollution beyond the installation boundary. These activities are as follows:

- Effects of diet and selection of feed
- Manure storage

- Dirty water storage
- Cleanliness of yard areas
- Housing and management
- Cleaning out
- Animal carcases
- Feed delivery and storage
- Ventilation
- Dust

Odour Management Plan Review

There are eight sensitive receptors, including plus a small caravan park located within 400m of the installation boundary, as listed below (please note, the distance stated is only an approximation from the Installation boundary to the assumed boundary of the property):

1. Residential property – approximately 121m west of the Installation boundary.

2. Small caravan park and associated residential property – approximately 170m west of the Installation boundary.

3. Residential properties x 2 – approximately 140m west of the Installation boundary.

4. Residential property – approximately 300m northeast of the Installation boundary.

5. Residential property – approximately 320m northeast of the Installation boundary.

6. Residential property – approximately 330m northeast of the Installation boundary.

7. Residential property – approximately 384m northeast of the Installation boundary.

The sensitive receptors that have been considered under odour and noise, do not include the operator's property and other people associated with the farm operations as odour and noise are amenity issues.

The Operator has provided an OMP (submitted 24/02/2026) and this has been assessed against the requirements of 'How to Comply with your Environmental Permit for Intensive Farming' EPR 6.09 (version 2), Appendix 4 guidance 'Odour Management at Intensive Livestock Installations' and our Top Tips Guidance and Pig Industry Good Practice Checklist (August 2013), as well as the site-specific circumstances at the Installation. We consider that the OMP is acceptable because it complies with the above guidance, with details of odour control measures, contingency measures and complaint procedures described below.

The Operator is required to manage activities at the Installation in accordance with condition 3.3.1 of the Permit and its OMP. The OMP includes odour control measures and procedural measures. The Operator has identified the potential sources of odour as well as the potential risks and problems, and detailed actions taken to minimise odour including contingencies for abnormal operations.

It should also be noted that for existing farms, having consulted with the Local Authority and our local area compliance team (see consultation response below), there are no known historical odour complaints at this site.

The OMP also provides a suitable procedure in the event that complaints are made to the Operator. The OMP is required to be reviewed at least every year (as committed to in the OMP) and/or after a complaint is received, and/or after any changes to operations at the installation, whichever is the sooner. The OMP includes contingency measures to minimise odour pollution during abnormal operations. A list of remedial measures is included in the contingency plan, including triggers for commencing and ceasing use of these measures.

The Environment Agency has reviewed the OMP and considers it complies with the requirements of our Odour management guidance note. We agree with the scope and suitability of key measures, but this should not be taken as confirmation that the details of equipment specification design, operation and maintenance are suitable and sufficient. That remains the responsibility of the Operator.

Although there is the potential for odour pollution from the Installation, the Operator's compliance with its OMP and permit conditions will minimise the risk of odour pollution beyond the Installation boundary. The risk of odour pollution at sensitive receptors beyond the Installation boundary is therefore not considered significant.

Conclusion

We have assessed the OMP and conclude that the Applicant has followed the guidance set out in EPR 6.09 Appendix 4 'Odour management at intensive livestock installations'. We are satisfied that all sources and receptors have been identified, and that the proposed mitigation measures will minimise the risk of odour pollution/nuisance.

Noise management

Intensive farming by its nature involves activities that have the potential to cause noise pollution. This is recognised in our 'How to Comply with your Environmental Permit for Intensive Farming' EPR 6.09 guidance.

Condition 3.4 of the permit reads as follows:

“Emissions from the activities shall be free from noise and vibration at levels likely to cause pollution outside the site, as perceived by an authorised officer of the Environment Agency, unless the Operator has used appropriate measures, including, but not limited to, those specified in any approved noise and vibration management plan, to prevent or where that is not practicable to minimise the noise and vibration”.

Under section 3.4 of the guidance, a Noise Management Plan (NMP) is required to be approved as part of the permitting process if, as is the case here, sensitive receptors (sensitive receptors in this instance excludes properties associated with the farm) are within 400m of the installation boundary. It is appropriate to require a NMP when such sensitive receptors have been identified within 400m of the installation to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to minimise the risk of pollution from noise emissions.

There are sensitive receptors within 400 metres of the installation boundary as stated under the ‘Odour’ section. The Operator has provided a NMP as part of the application supporting documentation, and further details are provided below.

The risk assessment for the installation provided within the NMP for the application lists key potential risks of noise pollution beyond the installation boundary. These activities are as follows:

- Feeding pigs
- Feed delivery
- Pig moving and loading
- Bedding pens
- Mucking out
- Dirty water tank filling and emptying
- Manure loading/transport
- Delivery supplies and materials
- Ventilation
- Vehicles operating within the installation boundary
- Alarms/standby generator
- Site maintenance

<u>Noise Management Plan Review</u>

The final NMP provided by applicant and assessed below was received as part of the application supporting documentation on 24/02/2026.

The NMP provides a suitable procedure in the event of complaints in relation to noise. The NMP is required to be reviewed at least every year (as committed to in the NMP), however the Operator has confirmed that it will be reviewed if a complaint is received, whichever is sooner. The NMP includes noise control measures and procedural measures.

It should also be noted that for existing farms, having consulted with the Local Authority and our local area compliance team (see consultation response below), there are no known historical noise complaints at this site.

We have included our standard noise and vibration condition, condition 3.4.1, in the Permit, which requires that emissions from the activities shall be free from noise and vibration at levels likely to cause pollution outside the site, as perceived by an authorised officer of the Environment Agency, unless the Operator has used appropriate measures, including, but not limited to, those specified in any approved NMP (which is captured through condition 2.3 and Table S1.2 of the Permit), to prevent or where that is not practicable to minimise the noise and vibration.

We are satisfied that the manner in which operations are carried out on the Installation will minimise the risk of noise pollution.

Conclusion

We have assessed the NMP for noise and conclude that the Applicant has followed the guidance set out in EPR 6.09 Appendix 5 'Noise management at intensive livestock Installations'. We are satisfied that all sources and receptors have been identified, and that the proposed mitigation measures will minimise the risk of noise pollution/nuisance.

Dust and bioaerosols management

The use of Best Available Techniques and good practice will ensure minimisation of emissions. There are measures included within the permit (the 'Fugitive Emissions' conditions) to provide a level of protection. Condition 3.2.1 'Emissions of substances not controlled by an emission limit' is included in the permit. This is used in conjunction with condition 3.2.2 which states that in the event of fugitive emissions causing pollution following commissioning of the installation, the Operator is required to undertake a review of site activities, provide an emissions management plan and to undertake any mitigation recommended as part of that report, once agreed in writing with the Environment Agency.

In addition, guidance on our website concludes that Applicants need to produce and submit a dust and bioaerosol management plan beyond the requirement of the initial risk assessment, with their applications only if there are relevant receptors within 100 metres including the farmhouse or farm workers' houses. Details can be found via the link below:

www.gov.uk/guidance/intensive-farming-risk-assessment-for-your-environmental-permit#air-emissions-dust-and-bioaerosols.

As there are receptors within 100m of the installation, the Applicant was required to submit a dust and bioaerosol management plan in this format. The final dust and bioaerosol management plan provided by the applicant and assessed below was received on 24/02/2026.

There is one sensitive receptor within 100m of the installation boundary, the nearest point of their assumed property boundary is approximately 12 metres to the north of the installation boundary, and approximately 14 metres from the nearest pig house.

In the guidance mentioned above it states that particulate concentrations fall off rapidly with distance from the emitting source. This fact, together with the proposed good management of the installation (such as keeping areas clean from build-up of dust and other measures in place to reduce dust and the risk of spillages e.g. litter and feed management/delivery procedures) all reduce the potential for emissions impacting the nearest receptors. The Applicant has confirmed measures in their dust and bioaerosol management plan to reduce dust (which will inherently reduce bioaerosols) for the following potential risks:

- General day to day activities
- Pig feed
- Bedding materials
- Manure removal system
- Ventilation
- House cleaning
- Building layout and design

We are satisfied that the measures outlined in the application will minimise the potential for dust and bioaerosol emissions from the installation.

Standby generator

There is one standby generator with a net thermal rated input of 0.138 MWth; it will not be tested more than 52 hours per year or operated (including testing) for more than 500 hours per year (averaged over 3 years) for emergency use only as a temporary power source if there is a mains power failure. The generator falls outside of the requirements of the Medium Combustion Plant Directive.

Ammonia

There is one Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and one Special Protection Area (SPA) located within 5 kilometres (km) of the installation boundary. There is also one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located within 5 km of the

installation boundary. There are no Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), Ancient Woodlands (AW) or other local nature conservation sites within 2 km of the installation boundary.

Revised screening using ammonia screening tool version 4.6 (dated 10/02/2026) was carried out assuming ventilation for both pig houses as side ventilation, natural or combination ventilation, as a worst-case scenario. This is because, although ventilation for pig house 2 consists of medium velocity roof fans, in practise dispersion will be limited as the fans are capped. Screening as side ventilation, natural or combination ventilation is therefore a precautionary approach.

Ammonia assessment – SAC/SPA

The following trigger thresholds have been designated for the assessment of European sites:

- If, using the Ammonia Screening Tool (AST v4.6) the process contribution (PC) is below 4% of the relevant critical level (CLe) or critical load (CLo) then the farm can be permitted with no further assessment.
- Where this threshold is exceeded, detailed ammonia modelling is required, and, if the PC from such modelling is below 1% of the relevant critical level (CLe) or critical loads (CLo) then the farm can be permitted with no further assessment.
- Where the PC (after modelling) exceeds 1%, further detailed assessment is required, taking into consideration the ammonia and nitrogen background concentrations and may also require an in-combination assessment.
- Where an in-combination assessment is required, the combined PC for all relevant existing permitted installations identified within 5 km of the SAC/SPA/Ramsar will be considered, together with impacts from other local plans, projects, and non-permitted farms which could act in-combination. The in-combination assessment is limited to those impacts not already included in the relevant background emission baseline.

Screening using the detailed modelling “A Report on the Modelling of the Dispersion and Deposition of Ammonia from the piggeries at Fir Tree Farm, near Stokesley in North Yorkshire” dated December 2024, has determined that the process contributions of ammonia emissions, nitrogen deposition and acid deposition on the SAC/SPA from the application site is less than the 1% insignificance threshold.

It is therefore possible to conclude no likely significant effect.

Detailed modelling provided by the Applicant has been checked by AQMAU and we have confidence that we can agree with the report conclusions. As this was low risk a full audit was not required.

The worst-case modelled process contributions are summarised in the tables below:

Table 1 – Ammonia emissions

Site	Critical level ammonia µg/m^3	Predicted process contribution µg/m^3	% of critical level
North York Moors SAC	1*	0.005	0.46
North York Moors SPA	1*	0.005	0.46

*A precautionary CLe of 1 µg/m^3 has been assigned to this site. Where the precautionary level of 1 µg/m^3 is used and the PC is assessed to be less than the 1% insignificance threshold it is not necessary to further consider nitrogen deposition or acid deposition CLo values.

Even though a precautionary critical level of 1 µg/m^3 has been used above, we have also included the nitrogen and acid deposition tables below to show a full assessment of all impacts.

Table 2 – Nitrogen deposition

Site	Critical load kg N/ha/yr *	Predicted PC kg N/ha/yr	PC % of critical load
North York Moors SAC	5	0.02	0.48
North York Moors SPA	5	0.02	0.48

*Critical load values taken from APIS website (www.apis.ac.uk) – 10/02/2026

Table 3 – Acid deposition

Site	Critical load keq/ha/yr *	Predicted PC keq/ha/yr	PC % of critical load
North York Moors SAC	0.504	0.0014**	0.3
North York Moors SPA	0.328	0.0014**	0.4

*Critical load values taken from APIS website (www.apis.ac.uk) – 10/02/2026

** Based on 1/14th of the maximum nitrogen deposition PC provided in Table 6 of the ammonia modelling report (A Report on the Modelling of the Dispersion and Deposition of Ammonia from the piggeries at Fir Tree Farm, near Stokesley in North Yorkshire dated December 2024)

No further assessment is required.

Ammonia assessment – SSSI

The following trigger thresholds have been applied for assessment of SSSIs:

- If the process contribution (PC) is below 20% of the relevant critical level (CLe) or critical load (CLo) then the farm can be permitted with no further assessment.
- Where this threshold is exceeded an assessment alone and in combination is required. An in-combination assessment will be completed to establish the combined PC for all existing farms identified within 5 km of the SSSI.

Initial screening using the ammonia screening tool version 4.6 (dated 10/02/2026) has indicated that emissions from Fir Tree Farm will only have a potential impact on the SSSI with a precautionary CLe of 1 μg/m^3 if they are within 1,891 metres of the emission source.

Beyond 1,891 m, the PC is less than 0.2 μg/m^3 (i.e. less than 20% of the precautionary 1 μg/m^3 CLe) and therefore beyond this distance the PC is insignificant. In this case the SSSI is beyond this distance (see table below) and therefore it screens out of any further assessment.

Where the precautionary level of 1 μg/m^3 is used and the PC is assessed to be less than 20%, the site automatically screens out as insignificant and no further assessment of CLo is necessary. In this case the 1 μg/m^3 level used has not been confirmed by Natural England, but it is precautionary. It is therefore possible to conclude no likely damage to this site.

Table 4 – SSSI Assessment

Name of SSSI	Distance from site (m)
North York Moors	3,476

No further assessment is required.

Decision considerations

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.

The decision was taken in accordance with our guidance on confidentiality.

Consultation

The consultation requirements were identified in accordance with the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations (2016) and our public participation statement.

The application was publicised on the GOV.UK website.

We consulted the following organisations:

- Local Authority – Environmental Health – North Yorkshire Council
- Health and Safety Executive
- UK Health Security Agency
- Director of Public Health

The comments and our responses are summarised in the consultation responses section.

Operator

We are satisfied that the applicant (now the Operator) is the person who will have control over the operation of the facility after the grant of the permit. The decision was taken in accordance with our guidance on legal operator for environmental permits.

The regulated facility

We considered the extent and nature of the facility at the site in accordance with RGN2 ‘Understanding the meaning of regulated facility’.

The extent of the facility is defined in the site plan and in the permit. The activities are defined in table S1.1 of the permit.

The site

The Operator has provided plans which we consider to be satisfactory, showing the extent of the site facilities.

The plans are included in the permit.

Site condition report

The Operator has provided a description of the condition of the site, which we consider is satisfactory. The decision was taken in accordance with our guidance on site condition reports.

Nature conservation, landscape, heritage and protected species and habitat designations

We have checked the location of the application to assess if it is within the screening distances, we consider relevant for impacts on nature conservation, landscape, heritage and protected species and habitat designations. The application is within our screening distances for these designations.

We have assessed the application and its potential to affect sites of nature conservation, landscape, heritage and protected species and habitat designations identified in the nature conservation screening report as part of the permitting process.

We consider that the application will not affect any site of nature conservation, landscape and heritage, and/or protected species or habitats identified.

See Ammonia section in the key issues above for more details.

We have not consulted Natural England. A HRA stage 1 was sent to them for information only on 12/03/2026.

The decision was taken in accordance with our guidance.

Environmental risk

We have reviewed the Operator's assessment of the environmental risk from the facility.

The Operator’s risk assessment is satisfactory.

General operating techniques

We have reviewed the techniques used by the Operator and compared these with the relevant guidance notes and we consider them to represent appropriate techniques for the facility.

The operating techniques that the applicant must use are specified in table S1.2 in the environmental permit.

The proposed techniques for priorities for control are in line with the benchmark levels contained in the Sector Guidance Note EPR6.09 and we consider them to represent appropriate techniques for the facility. The permit conditions ensure compliance with The Best Available Techniques (BAT) Reference document (BREF) for the Intensive Rearing of Poultry or Pigs (IRPP) published on 21st February 2017.

Odour management

We have reviewed the odour management plan in accordance with our guidance on odour management.

We consider that the odour management plan is satisfactory, and we approve this plan.

We have approved the odour management plan as we consider it to be appropriate measures based on information available to us at the current time. The applicant should not take our approval of this plan to mean that the measures in the plan are considered to cover every circumstance throughout the life of the permit.

The applicant should keep the plans under constant review and revise them annually or if necessary, sooner if there have been complaints arising from operations on site or if circumstances change. This is in accordance with our guidance ‘Control and monitor emissions for your environmental permit’.

The plan has been incorporated into the operating techniques table S1.2.

Noise management

We have reviewed the noise management plan in accordance with our guidance on noise assessment and control.

We consider that the noise management plan is satisfactory, and we approve this plan.

We have approved the noise management plan as we consider it to be appropriate measures based on information available to us at the current time. The applicant should not take our approval of this plan to mean that the

measures in the plan are considered to cover every circumstance throughout the life of the permit.

The applicant should keep the plans under constant review and revise them annually or if necessary, sooner if there have been complaints arising from operations on site or if circumstances change. This is in accordance with our guidance ‘Control and monitor emissions for your environmental permit’.

The plan has been incorporated into the operating techniques table S1.2.

Dust and bioaerosol management

We have reviewed the dust and bioaerosol management plan in accordance with our guidance on emissions management plans for dust.

We consider that the dust and bioaerosol management plan is satisfactory and we approve this plan.

We have approved the dust and bioaerosol management plan as we consider it to be appropriate measures based on information available to us at the current time. The applicant should not take our approval of this plan to mean that the measures in the plan are considered to cover every circumstance throughout the life of the permit.

The applicant should keep the plans under constant review and revise them annually or if necessary sooner if there have been complaints arising from operations on site or if circumstances change. This is in accordance with our guidance ‘Control and monitor emissions for your environmental permit.

The plan has been incorporated into the operating techniques S1.2.

Emission limits

We have decided that emission limits are required in the permit. BAT-AELs have been added in line with the Intensive Farming sector BAT Conclusions document dated 21/02/2017. These limits are included in table S3.3 of the permit.

Monitoring

We have decided that monitoring should be carried out for the parameters listed in the permit, using the methods detailed and to the frequencies specified.

These monitoring requirements have been imposed in order to ensure compliance with Intensive Farming BAT Conclusions document dated 21/02/2017.

Reporting

We have specified reporting in the permit, using the methods detailed and to the frequencies specified.

We made these decisions in order to ensure compliance with the Intensive Farming sector BAT Conclusions document dated 21/02/2017.

Management system

We are not aware of any reason to consider that the Operator will not have the management system to enable it to comply with the permit conditions.

The decision was taken in accordance with the guidance on Operator competence and how to develop a management system for environmental permits.

Previous performance

We have checked our systems to ensure that all relevant convictions have been declared.

No relevant convictions were found.

Financial competence

There is no known reason to consider that the Operator will not be financially able to comply with the permit conditions.

Growth duty

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 variation.

Paragraph 1.3 of the guidance says:

“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.”

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.

We consider the requirements and standards we have set in this permit are reasonable and necessary to avoid a risk of an unacceptable level of pollution. This also promotes growth amongst legitimate operators because the standards applied to the Operator are consistent across businesses in this sector and have been set to achieve the required legislative standards.

Consultation Responses

The following summarises the responses to consultation with other organisations, our notice on GOV.UK for the public and the way in which we have considered these in the determination process.

The consultation commenced on 27/10/2025 and ended on 24/11/2025.

Responses from organisations listed in the consultation section

Response received from: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) (17/11/2025).

Brief summary of issues raised:

1. The main emissions of potential public health significance from these installations are emissions to air of bioaerosols, dust, including particulate matter and ammonia.
2. We note that the north site has natural ventilation and therefore we recommend the Environment Agency are satisfied with this being sufficient to minimise impact from emissions to air.
3. In the Dust and Bioaerosol Assessment the applicant has only considered the impact on the Fir Tree Farmhouse residence however other supporting documentation considers residential areas beyond this distance.
4. We note inconsistency between the Environmental Risk Assessment and the non-duly made response regarding question 7. We recommend the Environment Agency clarifies this point and the site maintains accurate records.
5. We note that there is potential for dirty water to enter surface water as it is not clear whether suitable attenuation is carried out before discharge. We acknowledge that the Environment Agency has requested further information on this issue.
6. It is assumed by UKHSA that the installation will comply in all respects with the requirements of the permit, including the application of BAT. This should ensure that emissions present a low risk to human health.

Summary of actions taken:

1. The Applicant supporting information addresses all these emissions and we have no concerns. These two existing farms are currently operated as individual premises, so by combining them and bringing them under regulation of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales)

Regulations 2016 with this permit, will be an improvement to the existing situation, leading to better regulation of this pig farm.

2. The natural ventilation (northern unit) and capped roof ventilation (southern unit) has been modelled in the detailed modelling “A Report on the Modelling of the Dispersion and Deposition of Ammonia from the piggeries at Fir Tree Farm, near Stokesley in North Yorkshire” dated December 2024, and it has been concluded that the process contributions of ammonia emissions, nitrogen deposition and acid deposition from the site has no likely significant effect or likely damage to the nearby habitat sites. Therefore, the natural ventilation is acceptable for this site. See the ammonia key section above for more details. The impacts of dust from the installation are covered by the Applicant’s Environmental Risk Assessment and Dust and Bioaerosol Management Plan. From our experience of other such pig farms we are satisfied that ammonia impacts on human health will not be significant. This is based on the farm complying with the relevant BAT conclusions, which is confirmed for this site.
3. This is correct, as per our guidance at Intensive farming risk assessment for your environmental permit - GOV.UK, for dust and bioaerosol management plans applicant’s need to include relevant receptors within 100m of the installation boundary, this includes the farmhouse or farm workers houses, which they have done. We are satisfied with the dust and bioaerosol management plan submitted as part of this application, which is also referenced in table S1.2 Operating Techniques table within the permit. Other management plans (like odour and noise) look at receptors within 400m of the installation boundary; this is in accordance with our guidance and is detailed in the Dust and Bioaerosols Management, Odour Management and Noise Management key sections above.
4. A revised Environmental Risk Assessment was received on 24/02/2026 to address these inconsistencies, all mention of slurry has been removed from this document as this farm is a straw based system.
5. We are satisfied the roof water from the pig houses and water draining from yards (excluding all times yards are contaminated e.g. catching, mucking out or washing) will receive correct attenuation before discharging to surface waters. Surface water from Pig House 1 is intercepted by a hardcore area acting as a soakaway, prior to discharge, and surface water from Pig House 2 is intercepted by a silt trap, prior to discharge. Once the permit has been issued, we will conduct compliance visits to ensure this site is operated correctly. All dirty water and wash water is contained within dirty water tanks and will be spread on Operator controlled land in accordance with a Manure Management Plan.
6. The Applicant has confirmed their compliance with all relevant BAT conclusions for the new installation in their BAT document reference ‘Fir Tree Farm BAT Conclusions’ received 24/02/2026, which has been referenced in Table S1.2 - Operating Techniques, of the permit.

Response received from: North Yorkshire Council Environmental Health (05/11/2025).

Brief summary of issues raised: They gave a summary of the permit and supporting documentation and confirmed that there have been no formal complaints received by the Council in respect of the current operation.

Summary of actions taken: No further action required.

The Health and Safety Executive and Director of Public Health were also consulted but no responses were received.

Representations from community and other organisations

Response received from: Three responses from Coalition Against Factory Farming (CAFF) on 20/11/2025, 21/11/2025 and 23/11/2025.

Brief summary of issues raised and actions taken:

1. Requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
An EIA is required as part of any planning application. The applicant did not submit an EIA as part of the Environmental Permitting Regulations (EPR) application. We are satisfied we have sufficient information to determine the Application and have carried out an assessment of the environmental impact of the installation as part of the Permit determination.

2. Environmental impacts of farm to be assessed
These two existing farms are currently operated as individual premises, under the threshold to require a permit under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 (EPR). By combining them into one installation and bringing them under regulation of the EPR with this permit, represents an improvement to the existing situation, leading to better regulation of this pig farm. As part of this permit application, the Applicant has submitted supporting information to show the details and management of this farm is in accordance with our guidance Pigs and poultry intensive farming: environmental permits - GOV.UK, which we have assessed to be satisfactory. Once this permit has been issued, we will carry out compliance visits at the farm to ensure this farm is operated correctly.

3. Aggregation of the two farms is a significant intensification
This application has been submitted as a new bespoke permit application, to permit the two existing under threshold farms together as one installation under the EPR Section 6.9 Part A(1)(a)(ii)(iii) - Rearing pigs intensively in an installation with more than 2,000 places for production pigs (over 30kg). This permit does not

result in an increase in pigs numbers. Combining the two farms into an installation will lead to better regulation and represents an improvement to the existing situation. The Environment Agency does not operate under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

4. Manure management environmental implications

All pigs are kept on a solid floor with straw bedding. The two pig houses are scraped through approximately two to four times a week as needed. Manure from the northern unit is exported directly from site to be spread on third party land in accordance with a manure management plan. Manure from the southern unit is stored in a newly built muck store (on an impermeable base and bunded). Effluent from the manure store drains to a dirty water tank so all drainage from this infrastructure is contained. The manure store has capacity for a maximum of 200 tonnes of manure. Manure and dirty water are exported from site to be spread on third party land or Operator controlled land in accordance with a manure management plan.

The land where manure may be spread does not form part of the installation and so manure exported from the installation for storage and spreading outside the installation is outside the scope of our determination. The EPR scope of regulation is limited to preventing significant pollution from emissions from the installation. Emissions are substances released from the installation whilst something exported in a controlled manner for subsequent use elsewhere is not considered an emission. The latter includes manure removed as part of pig house cleanouts.

The installation boundary for permitted farms typically includes the livestock housing, any yard and associated infrastructure but does not routinely include wider adjacent land. Whilst on farm slurry and manure management, yard run off and drainage are regulated by the permit, the spreading of manures and slurry to land (and the associated potential for water quality impacts) is primarily regulated through separate regulatory regimes namely the Reduction and Prevention of Agricultural Diffuse Pollution (England) Regulations (Farming Rules for Water), and, in designated areas, the Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations.

The Applicant has confirmed that the receiver of the manure will confirm it is spread to land in accordance with the Code of Good Agricultural Practice, or in accordance with the manure management plan for the receiving land.

5. Meat consumption and inefficient use of valuable resources

This is not an issue under the Environment Agency’s regulatory responsibility. It does not therefore fall within the scope of the Permit determination.

6. Imported soy for animal feed and the environmental consequences

This is not an issue under the Environment Agency’s regulatory responsibility. It does not therefore fall within the scope of the Permit determination.

7. Water abstraction for borehole
Drinking water is obtained from a borehole at the farm, with mains water back-up, and is supplied via nipple drinkers or river drinkers to the pigs, which are designed to prevent leakage. It was confirmed at duly making that less than 20 cubic metres of water a day is abstracted, therefore an abstraction licence is not required, in accordance with our guidance at Change, revoke or transfer a water abstraction or impoundment licence - GOV.UK.

8. Wastewater drainage to nearby watercourses and Flood Zone 2/3
Roof water from Pig House 1 (northern unit) and water draining from yards (excluding all times yards are contaminated e.g. catching, mucking out or washing) is intercepted by a hardcore area acting as a soakaway, prior to discharge to an unnamed ditch to the west of Pig House 1, which ultimately drains to West Beck. Roof water from Pig House 2 (southern unit) and water draining from yards (excluding all times yards are contaminated e.g. catching, mucking out or washing) is intercepted by a silt trap prior to discharge to the West Beck, to the northwest of Pig House 2. All surface water receives appropriate attenuation before discharge.

All dirty water and wash water is contained in dirty water tanks and will be exported from site to be spread on Operator controlled land in accordance with a manure management plan and in accordance with the Code of Good Agricultural Practice.

At the duly making stage of the application, it was highlighted that this site borders flood zones 2/3 (although the installation itself is not within flood zone 2/3). The Environment Management System document was updated to take flooding into account, and the Applicant was advised that the accident management plan needs to address any flooding issues that may impact this installation. We do not review the full accident management plan during determination of the permit; this will be assessed at future compliance visits.

9. Risk of zoonotic disease and swine flu
The pigs will be kept indoors at all times so therefore it is extremely unlikely that they will contract swine flu. Effective biosecurity measures will also ensure that the likelihood of disease will be low. We are satisfied that the risk of pollution of the environment or harm to human health from the activities at the site are not likely to be significant. Our compliance team will ensure all relevant precautions are actioned in the event of any cases of swine flu.

10. Red meat and health concerns with cancer
This is not an issue under the Environment Agency's regulatory responsibility under EPR regulations. It does not therefore fall within the scope of the Permit determination.

11. Increased pollution concerns
There are eight sensitive receptors, including a small caravan park within 400m of the Installation boundary and so the Applicant was required to submit an odour

management plan (OMP) and noise management plan (NMP) as part of the application. We are satisfied that all sources of odour and receptors have been identified, and that the proposed mitigation measures will minimise the risk of odour and noise pollution/nuisance beyond the Installation boundary. The use of BAT and good practice will ensure emissions of odour and noise are minimised. Furthermore, standard conditions 3.3.1 and 3.4.1 concerning odour and noise have been included in the permit.

Our approach to the control of dust and bioaerosols is to require a dust and bioaerosol management plan for intensive farming installations with receptors within 100 metres of the Installation boundary. This is an agreed approach with UKHSA and the Environment Agency. This is a robust approach requiring the listing of both point source and fugitive emissions and controls to minimise impact on human health. The risk assessment criteria of 100 metres from the boundary is set out in our Intensive Farming risk assessment guidance at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/intensive-farming-risk-assessment-for-your-environmental-permit. There is one property (the Operators residence) within 100m of the installation boundary and the Applicant has supplied a satisfactory dust and bioaerosol management plan for this site.

The Applicant submitted a fugitive emissions risk assessment detailing measures to prevent significant emissions from the site, in accordance with our technical guidance note for intensive farming and the BAT Conclusions document. These measures include the use of appropriate ventilation systems, appropriate housing design and management, containment of feedstuff and management of manure. We are satisfied that these measures will mitigate emissions to prevent a significant impact from the site. Furthermore, standard condition 3.2.1 concerning fugitive emissions has been included in the permit. Issues from manure and dirty water have been discussed above under point 8.

We have carried out an assessment of the impact from this proposal on nearby habitat sites from ammonia emissions. There is one Special Area of Conservation, one Special Protection Area and one Site of Special Scientific Interest within 5 km of the installation boundary. There are no ancient woodlands, local wildlife sites or other nature conservation sites within 2 km of the installation boundary. Screening using the ammonia screening tool version 4.6 and detailed modelling “A Report on the Modelling of the Dispersion and Deposition of Ammonia from the piggeries at Fir Tree Farm, near Stokesley in North Yorkshire” dated December 2024, has concluded that all ammonia emissions from the site are insignificant. The ammonia key issues section of this document summarises our ammonia assessment.

A Greenhouse gas assessment is not required as part of the EPR permit application.

Consideration of traffic beyond the installation boundary, is not within the regulatory responsibility of the Environment Agency. It is a matter for the Local Planning Authority to consider in relation to any planning application.

Based upon the information in the Application we are satisfied that the appropriate measures will be in place to prevent pollution from beyond the Installation boundary and that activities will not give rise to significant pollution or harm to human health.

12. Twin-tracking of EPR Permit and Planning Permission.
This site is already existing, with no planned extensions to buildings, so planning permission will not be required at this current time. We have a legal duty to determine applications made to us under the EPR and we are satisfied that we have sufficient information to do so and to complete the determination.

Representations from individual members of the public

One hundred and forty-one responses were received from individual members of the public. These raised many of the same issues as previously addressed. Only those issues additional to those already considered are listed below:

1. Animal welfare
Animal welfare is not within the regulatory responsibility of the Environment Agency. It does not form part of the Permit decision making process. The Environment Agency is responsible for ensuring that the activities at the Installation do not have an unacceptable impact on the environment or human health.

The principal regulator for animal health is the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), whose main purpose is to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.

2. Use of antibiotics
The use of antibiotics does not fall within the regulatory responsibility of the Environment Agency.

3. Meat consumption
This is not an issue under the Environment Agency's regulatory responsibility. It does not therefore fall within the scope of the Permit determination.

4. Requirement for a Climate Assessment
Assessment of a climate change risk assessment is outside the scope of the determination of the Application however the Operator will be required to complete one as part of ongoing compliance, which our compliance team will assess.

5. Requirement for a Nutrient Management plan
Assessment of a nutrient management plan is outside the scope of the determination of the Application. Where organic manures (including manure and wash water) are applied to land owned and managed by the Operator, it must be spread in accordance with a manure management plan.

As outlined above, the Applicant has confirmed that all manure and wash water is exported from the Installation for spreading on land owned by third parties or on Operator controlled land in accordance with the manure management plan for the receiving land.

We are satisfied, following a review of the information provided by the Applicant and the conditions present within the Permit, that emissions from the Installation will not cause significant pollution of the environment.

6. Requirement for an Ecological Impact Assessment
Assessment of an Ecological Impact Assessment is outside the scope of the determination of the Application. However, we are satisfied, following a review of the information provided by the Applicant and the conditions present within the Permit, that emissions from the Installation will not cause significant pollution of the environment.

7. Inadequate information on manure management
This is a straw based system, and the Applicant has provided all the information we require at permit application regarding manure storage. The Applicant has confirmed the Operator will export manure to third party land in accordance with a manure management plan. We do not request a copy of the manure management plan at permit application stage; this will be reviewed during future compliance visits. The Applicant has also confirmed manure will be spread to land in accordance with the Code of Good Agricultural Practice.

8. Ammonia and air quality to be assessed
Detailed modelling “A Report on the Modelling of the Dispersion and Deposition of Ammonia from the piggeries at Fir Tree Farm, near Stokesley in North Yorkshire” dated December 2024, was submitted with the application. The details of the assessment are summarised in the ammonia key issues section of this document. The modelling demonstrates that the site is low risk in relation to ammonia emissions and no additional abatement or changes to pig stocking density is required.

9. Impact of particulate matter on local residents
Particulate concentrations fall off rapidly with distance from the emitting source. This fact, together with the proposed good management of the Installation, such as keeping areas clean from build-up of dust, and other measures in place to reduce dust and risk of spillages (e.g. manure and feed management/delivery procedures) all reduce the potential for emissions impacting the nearest receptors.

With regards to particulate matter, our approach to dust and bioaerosol control (to require a dust and bioaerosol management plan for intensive farming installations with receptors within 100 metres of the installation boundary) will reduce total overall dust levels which will subsequently reduce PM10 and PM2.5 particle size dust, with most of the measures focusing on reducing creation of dust at source. This is an agreed approach with former Public Health England (now UKHSA) and the Environment Agency. The Applicant has provided a satisfactory dust and bioaerosol management plan, see key issues above for more detail.

We are satisfied that the measures outlined in the Application will prevent, and where that is not practicable minimise, dust and bioaerosol emissions from the Installation and prevent significant pollution or harm to human health. We are also satisfied that we have sufficient controls within the permit conditions to enable further measures to be implemented should these be required.

10. Dirty water systems not fully specified and separation of clean water
The Applicant has provided all the information we required at permit application regarding containment of dirty water and wash out water, including a site drainage plan which will be referenced in the permit. The Applicant has confirmed it will export dirty water to Operator controlled land in accordance with a manure management plan. We do not request a copy of the manure management plan at permit application stage; this will be reviewed during future compliance visits. The Applicant has confirmed dirty water will be spread to land in accordance with the Code of Good Agricultural Practice.

Roof water from Pig House 1 (northern unit) and water draining from yards (excluding all times yards are contaminated e.g. catching, mucking out or washing) is intercepted by a hardcore area acting as a soakaway, prior to discharge to an unnamed ditch to the west of Pig House 1, which ultimately drains to West Beck. Roof water from Pig House 2 (southern unit) and water draining from yards (excluding all times yards are contaminated e.g. catching, mucking out or washing) is intercepted by a silt trap prior to discharge to the West Beck, to the northwest of Pig House 2. All surface water receives appropriate attenuation before discharge. Any spillages on clean yard areas will be cleaned up immediately.

11. Noise and odour assessments
There are eight sensitive receptors, including a small caravan park within 400m of the Installation boundary and so the Applicant was required to submit an odour management plan (OMP) and a noise management plan (NMP) as part of the application. We are satisfied that all sources and receptors have been identified, and that the proposed mitigation measures will minimise the risk of odour and noise pollution/nuisance. Further detail regarding these management plans can be viewed in the key issues sections above. The use of BAT and good practice will ensure emissions of odour and noise are minimised. Furthermore, standard

conditions 3.3.1 and 3.4.1 concerning odour and noise have been included in the permit.

12. Traffic

Consideration of traffic beyond the installation boundary is not within the regulatory responsibility of the Environment Agency. It is a matter for the Local Planning Authority to consider in relation to any planning application.

13. A clear biosecurity and health management plan

Effective biosecurity measures on site will ensure that the likelihood of disease will be low. We are satisfied that the risk of pollution of the environment or harm to human health from the activities at the site are not likely to be significant. We consulted relevant health bodies as part of our external consultation process and no major concerns were raised.

14. Biodiversity and habitat loss

Given the nature of the proposed activity, there is the potential for atmospheric ammonia to be released into the environment and impact nearby sensitive habitats and species. For this reason, we have carried out an assessment of the risk and concluded that all ammonia emissions from the site are insignificant. The key issues section of this document summarises our ammonia assessment. The installation boundary is marked clearly and is included in the permit and does not encroach on local habitat sites.

15. Resource use and deforestation

This is not an issue under the Environment Agency's regulatory responsibility within the EPR regulations. It does not therefore fall within the scope of the Permit determination.