

2. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

In 2018, Aberdeen & Northern Eggs Limited constructed two additional sheds at their West Cockmuir site. These sheds each hold 16,000 birds are to be included within the PPC permit, along with another free range shed at West Cockmuir which has been operational and included within the current permit's site plan, although not within the current permitted capacity. At the Hillside site, an additional shed which can house 16,000 free range layers has also been constructed. Two sheds have been decommissioned (one at the Auchtygills site and one at the Hillfoot site) and are to be removed from the existing PPC permit. In addition, a number of other sheds are being converted to house different bird types. The site is currently permitted to hold 418,000 places for hens. Capacity has been recalculated with more accurate figures and with the proposed changes, the new maximum capacity for the PPC permit will be 332,000 places in total (221,000 places for free range layers and 111,000 places for barn layers).

The location of the two new sheds at West Cockmuir was chosen because of its proximity to the main site. It is within 500m of the packing centre and where birds are reared which keeps transport costs low. The new sheds were built on greenfield and close to an established woodland which helps to screen the installation. There were no objections raised by nearby receptors when the site applied for planning permission. Similarly, the new location of the new shed at Hillside was chosen as the ideal location as there were already 24,000 layers on that site and the infrastructure was already present for increasing bird numbers whilst ensuring that it remained manageable for one employee to oversee.

Efficient gable end fans have been installed in the two additional sheds at Cockmuir (CM2, CM3). High velocity roof fans have been installed at the additional shed at Hillside (HS2). Other sheds (CM4, CM5) have been fitted with high velocity roof fans and when converted, two additional sheds (CM6 CM7) will also be fitted with efficient, high velocity roof fans. New sheds have optimised ventilation systems, are well insulated and use low energy lighting. Biomass heat exchangers are used in a number of sheds and others have manure belt drying in accordance with 'Best Available Techniques'.

The ammonia impact of the proposed installation has been compared with how the unit was operating in 2015. In 2015, total ammonia emissions were calculated to be 22,847kgNH₃ per year. The changes proposed in this variation, combined with reductions in emission factors (due to animal diet and manure drying techniques) mean that the calculated ammonia emissions for the proposed installation will be 18,967kgNH₃ per year.

An Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) was completed for the unit in 2019 (Appendix D). It noted that based on the existing approved PPC installation and the installation of Cockmuir 2 and Cockmuir 3, there would be an exceedance of the PM₁₀ annual mean objective at the sensitive receptor called Hillside and the PM₁₀ annual mean objective at the sensitive receptor called Peedie House would be close to exceedance. The AQIA suggested some mitigation measures which if implemented, demonstrated that the annual mean objective would not be exceeded. The AQIA has been reviewed in context of additional changes (and mitigation) at West Cockmuir. This has been included in Appendix E.

It is expected that there will be a slight increase in energy and water consumption and waste production from the unit but the additional sheds will be operated in line with the requirements of SEPA's Standard Farming Installation Rules (SFIR). Management techniques will remain the same across the permitted operations.

Site plans have been updated to include the new sheds and remove decommissioned sheds (Appendix B).