Decision Document (Technical):

Industrial Activities - Permit level

New Applications and Variations

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General Information relating to Application	
Application Reference Number:	APP2026-00000272
Authorisation Number (if applicable):	N/A
Application Type:	Variation - Operator initiated Standard
Applicant/Authorised Person:	**H A Blackwood**
Authorised Address:	Auldhouseburn Farm, Muirkirk, Ayrshire, KA18 3RZ
Authorised Activity(s):	Intensive rearing of poultry — (a) with more than 40 000 places for poultry

Purpose of the document

This document is intended to demonstrate transparency of the determination process to all interested parties. It should record all significant issues, decisions made, actions taken, and rationale for the decision made. It should be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate that all legal requirements were adhered to and provide the basis for defending any appeal.

Language used

You should use non-technical language as far as practicable, avoiding unexplained acronyms and technical terms. While aiming to be comprehensive, it must also be as brief as possible, consistent with the overriding need for clarity and accuracy. Officers should bear in mind that much of the document may be available publicly under the Freedom of Information Act etc.

Timely recording of information

Completion of the various forms should be done on a progressive basis rather than at the end of the process.

Level of detail

Officers should use their professional judgement as to the level of detail required which will depend on the complexity of the process. Officers must consider why the information is required and ensure appropriate detail is included. Each table is designed to be expanded as text is added and will obviously allow the insertion of additional rows where necessary

Applicability of any Section

Do not delete whole sections of the form unless directed to do so. If something is not applicable to your determination, please record this on the form and give a justification if appropriate indicating you have considered the issue and not just missed.

1. Non-Technical Summary of SEPAs Determination

This section provides a non-technical summary of the proposed application and of SEPAs determination with particular focus on areas of our determination which may be regarded as contentious either by SEPA, the applicant or the public.

Provide a non-technical summary of the process and SEPA's determination:
The applicant, HA Blackwood, has applied for a variation to the current permit at Auldhouseburn Farm, Muirkirk, Ayrshire, alongside a partial surrender of one housing unit at the Marchwood area of the farm. Before the partial surrender, on the permit at VAR02, there were 128,000 free range hens in four poultry housing units. The recently issued partial surrender removed 32,000 hens and one housing unit and this variation will add one housing unit at the Greenside area of the farm with 32,000 free range egg-laying birds in a multi-tiered aviary with ranging area. This variation to the permit will permit 128,000 free range hens in four poultry housing units at Auldhouseburn Farm. Auldhouseburn Farm is located at NS 7073 2660, with the new area to be added being approximately 2km north of the Farm at NS 69666 28669. The main farm area is 1km South East of Muirkirk, with the new area being 1km north of Muirkirk. Whilst the distance from the original 3 sheds is greater than what would generally be considered to constitute the same site, this activity is technically connected to the original 3 houses for example, biosecurity protocols, common manure storage, raw material use and waste management and management policies and structure and therefore has been authorised as part of the poultry rearing business at Auldhouseburn. This is a Drinking Water Protected Area (DWPA) (groundwater). There is some surface water flooding risk at the original three houses, but not at the proposed new house at Greenside. Auldhouse Burn is near to the original three houses. There are duties placed on SEPA for the protection of designated sites under The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 and the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. Auldhouseburn Farm lies within 10km of 13 designated sites (see Background section of this document for more information). SCAIL screening concluded that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on the features of the nearby designated sites. This proposal is further away from the designated site than the original Marchwood site and mitigation has been applied in the form of forced air drying of manure on the belts and proposed tree planting at the gable end. A SCAIL comparison showed that Greenside showed a reduced impact on the SPA and SSSI with the same number of birds. (see Background to application section of this document for more information).

SEPA has assessed that the proposal passes screening, and further detailed assessment is not required.

The birds are introduced to the housing unit at 15 weeks and remain there for approximately 65 weeks before the flock is depleted. In the free-range houses, pop holes will allow access onto the range area.

Temperature is monitored and adjusted to ensure optimal conditions and animal welfare. The shed is designed to minimise ammonia emissions through insulation of walls and roof, with concrete flooring and bedded with wood shavings, topped up as required.

The principal emissions from the unit are ammonia and dust.

The housing unit will have Big Dutchman air-handling units installed. Fresh air is drawn in through roof inlet chimneys positioned along the ridge line and each house will have eight exhaust fans positioned at each gable end. These exhaust fans are computer controlled. A tree shelter belt will be planted around the buildings to screen the unit and is expected to reduce ammonia emissions.

Hen manure will be removed twice weekly from the house via manure belt, into a covered trailer and taken to the manure store within the permitted installation. The provision of forced air onto manure belts in accordance with SEPA best practice, will minimise ammonia generation and maximise nitrogen retention for subsequent use as a fertiliser.

Odour is minimised by maintaining dry litter, and ammonia production is controlled through optimised dietary protein levels.

Birds are fed balanced diets reviewed and optimised by nutritionist, with crude protein in the diet reduced as the birds age. Diets contain phytase which reduce the total phosphorus excreted. Multiphase feeding is provided throughout the production period. Feed is stored in outside silos with cyclones to prevent dust, and augered into sheds and distributed to pan feeders. Feed storage structures are sited on concrete pads, away from vulnerable locations with collision barriers installed where appropriate.

Drinking water is supplied via mains water supply. There is no water storage on site. Water is distributed to the birds through nipple drinkers supplemented with collection cups. Water consumption will be monitored for hygiene and animal welfare purposes.

Electricity to the site will come from the Mains network and is supported by a roof-based solar photovoltaic (PV) array. There is a back-up generator at the Greenside housing unit. This will be <1MW rated thermal input.

At the end of each cycle, the shed is emptied and deep cleaned. All wash water is collected in tanks onsite before being removed to be spread to land in accordance with GBR18.

Lightly contaminated roof and surface water from the concrete pads around the site and scratch areas will drain to two swales for treatment. The swales have been designed in accordance with the size and design based on CREW - Rural SuDS Design and Build Guide December 2016. The swale discharges are to be via a soakaway at their downstream end. An upgrade condition

relating to the swales is to be added to the permit to ensure that the designed swales fulfils the requirements of CREW.

Eggs are conveyed to a central services area at each site where they are packed for processing off site.

Bird mortalities are collected daily and removed to storage at the incineration building using transit boxes. A sealable container is located next to the incinerator for the storage of deadstock. The ash is stored in a covered container within the incinerator building and collected by registered contractors.

Foot baths are located on the site at Greenside for all personnel. Disinfectant is changed twice per week to ensure high biosecurity and disposed of with the manure.

Collectively, these measures are intended to reduce the production and release of ammonia, odours, and dust from the housing units, to prevent liquid washings escaping to the environment, and to manage the waste produced on-site. All aspects of building design and operation will be supported by management systems that aim to minimise the impact of the permitted activities on emissions to air, water, and land.

The application submitted complies with the requirements of EASR. There is an Environmental Management Plan in place and will be expanded to include the new housing unit.

We regard the measures proposed by the applicant as appropriate and on this basis, SEPA proposes to grant the permit.

Glossary of Terms

AESI – Adverse Effect on Integrity of the Site
BAT - Best Available Techniques
BREF – Best Available Techniques Reference Document
BAT-C – Best Available Technique Conclusions
CO – Coordinating Officer
CREW - Centre of Expertise for Waters
DWPA – Drinking Water Protected Area
ELV – Emission Limit Value
LSE – Likely Significant Effect
NVZ – Nitrate Vulnerable Zone
PEPFAA - Prevention of Environmental Pollution From Agricultural Activity
PV - Photo Voltaic panels
SAC - Special Area of Conservation
SPA - Special Protected Area
SSSI - Site of Special Scientific Interest
The Regulations (EASR) – The Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations 2018

2. Background to the Application

This section provides relevant context regarding the background to the application, an outline of the authorisation being applied for, and identification of important sensitive receptors.

Background to the application:
The application is made by the firm of HA Blackwood at Auldhouseburn Farm, Muirkirk, Ayrshire. The site is located at NS 7073 2660. The area is a Drinking Water Protected Area (DWPA) (groundwater). The permit was issued in 2010 and has been varied four times. A variation in January 2025 (VAR02) added a new housing unit for 32,000 birds at the area known as Marchwood. However, this was never built and the operator purchased additional land at Greenside that was determined to be a better fit for the new housing unit. The Marchwood area of the permit was surrendered alongside this variation. Under this variation application, the new area and housing unit at Greenside plans to use the same infrastructure and planning as planned for the Marchwood area. The new housing unit at Greenside will house 32,000 birds, divided into two houses of 16,000 birds each. The applicant was required to demonstrate that the poultry housing units were designed having regard to the following principles outlined in the Intensive rearing of Poultry or Pigs BREF and the BAT Conclusions: • reducing the ammonia-emitting surface; • removing the manure frequently to an external store (e.g., with belt removal systems); • quickly drying the manure; • using surfaces which are smooth and easy to clean; • lowering the indoor temperature and ventilation as much as animal welfare and/or production allow. The proposals for the new housing demonstrate that the chosen design addresses the above principles.
Outline details of the authorisation/variation applied for:
A partial surrender of the permit issued prior to this variation, removed 32,000 free range egg laying birds from the Marchwood area of the site. This variation application is to add a new housing unit, divided into two houses at the area known as Greenside, with 32,000 birds in total to the permit, bringing the total birds on this permit to 128,000 free range egg laying birds in four housing units. Directly Associated Activities include: • Feed delivery & storage • Chemical storage • Manure handling • Dirty water storage • Storage of fallen stock for disposal by incineration • Management of lightly contaminated surface water • Auxiliary power generation

Identification of important and sensitive receptors – the use of Ordnance Survey map extracts can help:

Where sensitive receptors are located within 250 metres of a poultry unit, SEPA requires the Applicant to screen emissions of particulate matter to establish whether the emission will cause any air quality objectives to be breached.

There are no identified sensitive human health receptors within 250m of the new building at Greenside. The nearest receptors are more than 1km north and 720m south of the new building. The Operator has confirmed that the ruined buildings at the Greenside area are not to be developed and have therefore not been considered as human health receptors for the purposes of this assessment.

SEPA must assess the amount of ammonia and nitrogen that will be deposited on designated features within 10km of the installation.

The proposed new housing unit at Auldhouseburn Farm is within 10 kilometres of the following NatureScot designated sites:

Designation	Site	Distance from unit (m)	Qualifying feature
SPA	Muirkirk and North Lowther Uplands	1,200	Golden plover, breeding Hen harrier, breeding Hen harrier, non breeding Merling, breeding
SSSI	Muirkirk Uplands	2,000	Blanket bog Breeding bird assemblage Hen harrier, breeding Hen harrier, non-breeding
SSSI	Blood Moss and Slot Burn	3,000	Arthropoda (Earth Sciences) (Palaeontology) Blanket Bog Silurian (Earth Sciences) (Palaeontology)
SSSI	Garpel Water	3,000	Lower Carboniferous (Earth Sciences) (Geological)
SAC	Airds Moss	5,300	Blanket Bog
SSSI	Greenock Mains	6,500	Quaternary of Scotland (Earth Sciences) (Geology & Geomorphology)
SSSI	Ree Burn and Glenbuck Loch	6,300	Wenlock (Earth Sciences) (Geological)
SSSI	Birk Knowes	7,000	Llandovery (Earth Sciences) Silurian (Earth Sciences)
SSSI	Shiel Burn	7,800	Silurian (Earth Sciences) (Palaeontology)

SSSI	Kennox Water	8,800	Lower Carboniferous (Earth Sciences)
SSSI	North Lowther Uplands	9,200	Breeding bird assemblage Hen harrier, breeding Mineralogy of Scotland (Earth Sciences) Upland Assemblage
SSSI	Dunside	9,350	Arthropoda (excluding insects and trilobites) (Geological: Palaeontology)
SSSI	Birkenhead Burn	9,800	Silurian-Devonian Chordata (Geological: Palaeontology)

Please see section “Assessment of Impact on Protected Areas” for more information.

3. Confirmation of Activities and Place

Are we satisfied that the applicant has specified the correct activities?
Yes. As per application.
Where a Schedule 20 activity is being undertaken are we satisfied that the applicant has correctly specified the Stationary Technical Unit and directly associated activities? For permit level activities which are not Schedule 20, has the applicant identified all processes which are part of the regulated activity?

Yes. As per application.

STU –

- Addition of Greenside free range aviary system housing unit with capacity of 32,000 birds to the permit totalling 128,000 birds within 4 housing units.
- Ventilation system at each house – forced roof inlets, passive side inlets and forced gable outlets
- Multi tiered aviary system with manure collection belts and air drying
- Feed delivery – augurs from storage bins to feeding stations, conveyor belts
- Drinking water system – nipple drinkers collection cups at each house

DAAs –

- Chemical storage on site
- Feed storage – series of bins for holding feed mix
- Two dirty wash water tanks at Greenside to collect wash water from housing
- Air drying of manure on conveyor belts
- Manure collection and removal via conveyor belts and stored in covered trailer before uplift to manure storage in covered manure store
- Litter removed at end each cycle
- Storage and disposal of fallen stock – sealable deadstock container (point A)
- Auxiliary power generation - diesel generators – detailed on layout plans
- Swales located as per layout plans – lightly contaminated run off
- Heat recovery system – water source heat pumps

Are we satisfied that the applicant has correctly defined the boundary of the Authorised Place/Installation?
Yes. As per application.

4. Public Consultation on the Application and SEPA's response

In determining whether to consult the public on the application, reference will have been made to SEPAs '*Public Participation Statement*' as required by regulation 67(1), the specific activity pages on SEPAs website and relevant internal guidance.

Was Public Consultation on the application undertaken?	Yes
Date placed on Consultation Hub?	04/03/2026
Were representations received?	No
Summary of responses and how they were considered during the determination:	
No responses	

Was the applicant required to undertake additional steps to publicise the application?	No
If yes, have they provided evidence that the additional steps required were undertaken?	Choose an item.
Comment: N/A	

5. Consultation on the Application with Public Bodies and SEPA's response

In determining whether to consult the public on the application, reference will have been made to SEPAs '*Public Participation Statement*' as required by regulation 67(1), the specific activity pages on SEPAs website and relevant internal guidance.

Was Public Consultation on the application undertaken?	No

6. Other Consultations

In determining whether to consult the public on the application, reference will have been made to SEPAs '*Public Participation Statement*' as required by regulation 67(1), the specific activity pages on SEPAs website and relevant internal guidance.

Was "Off-site" consultation required?	No
Was Transboundary Consultation required?	No

7. Assessment of Impact on Protected Areas

All activities authorised by SEPA must be assessed in relation to their potential impact on designated sites under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 & Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994. The outcome of the nature conservation screening assessment is recorded below.

Outcome:	Activity is unlikely to have a significant effect on the qualifying interest of any SAC, SPA or RAMSAR site, and/or damage a notified feature of a SSSI
Where an activity **is likely** to have a significant effect on the qualifying interest of any SAC, SPA or RAMSAR site, and or is likely to damage a notified feature of a SSSI please provide information on the implications for determination of the application below including details of consultation with Nature Scot:	
N/A	

8. Consideration of other legislation in the determination

Is there any other legislation that was considered during determination of the permit (for example installations that may be impacted by the requirements of legislation involving Animal By-Products, Food Standards, TFS, etc). If yes, provide information on the legislation, action and justification below:	**Yes**

Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (Scotland) Regulations 2013:
Regulates carcass disposal. Carcass storage is a Directly Associated Activity (DAA) in the permit.

The Welfare of Farmed Animals (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2010
Range areas and animal places are calculated in line with maximum stocking densities regulated by Scottish Government.

Medium Combustion Plant Directive (MCPD):
For all proposed plant >1MW regulated as DAA on IA installations, BAT will apply and SEPA should complete Local Air Quality Management and Nature Conservation Habitat screening. If required, SEPA will impose monitoring of emissions within 4 months and then every 3 years with ELVs from Process Guidance Note 1/3 or the MCPD. There is no proposed plant >1MW on site at the time of permit issue.

Environmental Authorisation (Scotland) Regulations 2018 (EASR):
Water, waste management, and industrial activities are regulated under Environmental Authorisation (Scotland) Regulations 2018.

Land spreading activities that will be taking place outwith the site boundary and will be regulated under GBR18.

Foul drainage systems will be regulated separately under EASR and will not form part of the permitted Installation.

The requirements for the generator oil storage are regulated under GBR28.

9. Outcome of In Control and Fit and Proper Person Assessment

In determining an application SEPA must satisfy itself that the applicant will both be in control of the proposed activity and that they are considered a fit and proper person to be in control of the activity. The criteria which we use to assess whether an applicant/authorised person is in control and a fit and proper person is outline in our 'Who can hold an authorisation' guidance. The outcome of our assessment is recorded below.

We must not grant an application if we think the applicant will not have control over the activity, or we do not think they are a fit and proper person to be in control of the activity.

Outcome:	The applicant will be in control of the activity and is considered a fit and proper person to be in control of the activity

10. Further Information

In determining an application, it may be necessary to request further information. Where further information has been requested, it will be recorded in the table below.

Has a further information notice been issued?	**No**

11. SEPAs Assessment of the Applicants Environmental Management Systems and Risk Assessments

Relevant Guidance used for determination
• BAT Reference document Intensive Rearing of Poultry or Pigs • UK Interpretation Guidance and Permitting Advice on the Best Available Techniques (BAT) Conclusions for Intensive Rearing of Poultry or Pigs • CREW Rural SuDS Guide - surface water run off advice • PEPFAA Code - Prevention of Environmental Pollution from Agricultural Activity • IND-G-019: A practical guide for Schedules 20 & 26 EASR Permit-level Industrial Activities • Defra emissions guidance- Ammonia emission factors for pig and poultry screening, modelling and reporting
Management of the site
Environmental Management System:
BAT 1 & 2

Good site management is a requirement of the EASR Regulations & BREF as well as the Food Safety Act 1990, regulated by the Food Standards Agency, and the Animal Welfare Act 2006. Agricultural installations are subject to regulatory controls requiring Operators to operate to a high standard both to ensure welfare of animals and to standard of products entering the food chain.

BAT 1 requires that the permitted activity is operated in accordance with an environmental management system (EMS). The BREF requires that in order to improve the overall environmental performance, the EMS should incorporate the following key features:

- Management commitment
- Environmental policy
- Financial planning and investment
- Relevant procedures (training, record keeping, maintenance, emergency procedures)
- Checking performance (monitoring, preventative action, auditing)
- Review
- Continual improvement
- Benchmarking
- Noise Management Plan
- Odour Management Plan

BAT 2 requires good housekeeping to prevent or reduce the environmental impact and improve overall performance. This includes training, routine maintenance and an emergency plan.

There will be no significant change to the written EMS in place, it will be expanded to include the new housing unit at Greenside. The EMS will be assessed as part of SEPA's compliance inspections.

Accidents and their Consequences:

BAT 1

Health and safety under EASR regulations focuses on managing risks to human health as part of an integrated approach to environmental protection. SEPA would require, under the conditions of the permit, the Authorised Person to take action to limit the immediate environmental impact and where necessary implement changes to try to ensure that the event does not happen again.

In general, all accidents or incidents likely to cause pollution and all complaints to the site regarding nuisance emissions are required by Schedule 2 of the Permit to be recorded and dependent on the severity, notified to SEPA. Emergency preparedness and response (incident prevention and mitigation) are required as per BAT 1 as part of the Environmental Management System for the site.

The applicant has expanded the Incident Prevention and Mitigation Plan to include the new housing unit, with appropriate actions designed to minimise the environmental impact of any polluting releases.

Closure:

In order to ensure that the site can be returned to its pre-EASR Permit state, SEPA have required the applicant detail any pre-application problems prior to permitting so that a site surrender report can be compared with the Site Condition and Baseline Reports. Soil and groundwater monitoring, which will take into consideration the specific design and locations of the swales, will be undertaken prior to operation of the poultry house. The baseline report will include relevant hazardous substances and the locations and details of any boreholes. There is an upgrade condition within the permit reflecting this.

Surrender of the permit is by an application to SEPA and the applicant shall need to remediate the site where required to the levels cited in the baseline report.

(See "Site Condition Report, Baseline Report and Soil and Groundwater Monitoring" section below for more information).

Start-up/Shutdown plan (where relevant):

N/A

Emissions to Air and Monitoring

Point Source emission to air:

The principal point source of emissions to air from Auldhouseburn Farm will be from the housing units, specifically the ventilation system in the form of ammonia and dust and to a lesser extent, from the emergency generator in terms of fuel fumes.

Ammonia and dust will be minimised by carefully managing air exchange to control humidity levels within the sheds and managing the dry matter content of the litter.

Ammonia (BAT 23 & 31)

Ammonia can be carried on the air and deposited in lochs and ponds causing eutrophication. To quantify the amount of ammonia which will be emitted, SEPA use DEFRA-approved emission factors. The emission factors are specific to each housing system. Some housing systems are more efficient than others and will result in a lower emission factor. The proposed housing at the Greenside area of Auldhouseburn Farm meets the description in BAT Conclusion 31 (b) (4) 'manure belts (in case of aviary)'.

There are duties placed on SEPA for the protection of designated sites under The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 and the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. The Greenside area of Auldhouseburn Farm lies within 10 kilometres of 13 designated sites.

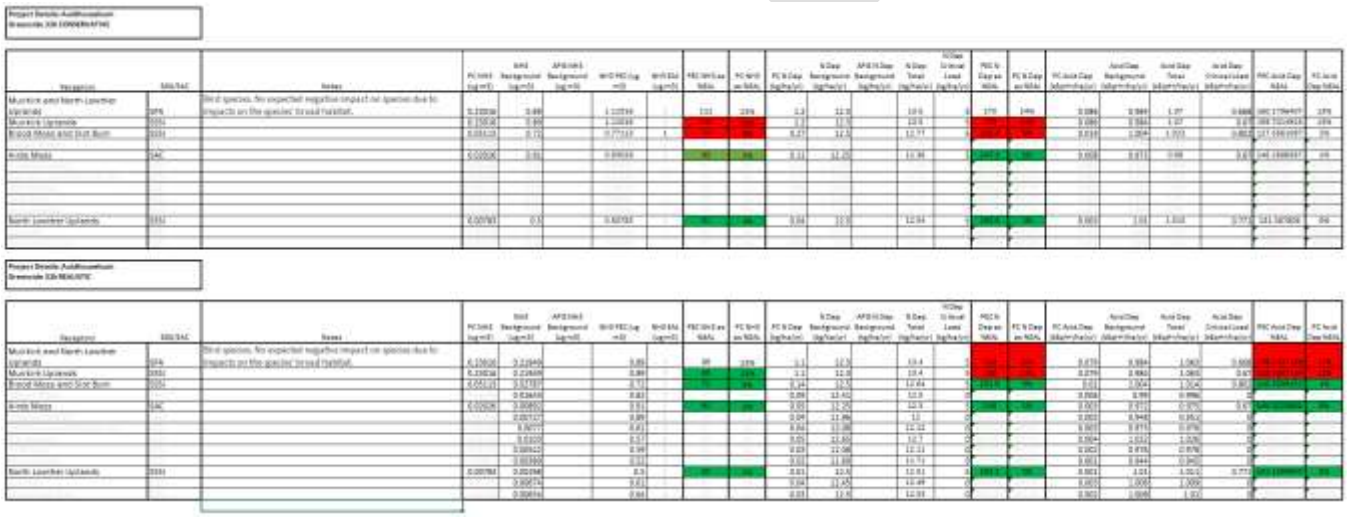
SEPA uses the Simple Calculation of Atmospheric Impact Limits (SCAIL) model to access the impact of ammonia emissions and nitrogen and acid deposition on designated sites.
If PCs screen out alone i.e. the PC is less than 4% of the critical load or level, no further assessment is required and no 'likely significant effect' can be concluded. If PCs do not screen out i.e. PC is more than 4% of the critical load or level, they are added to background pollutant concentration or deposition flux data to obtain a Predicted Environmental Concentration (PEC). If PEC is less than 100% of the critical load or level screening passes and we can conclude that the proposal is not causing 'likely significant effect'. If PEC is more than 100% of the critical load or level screening fails and consultation with NatureScot and appropriate assessment is required

Designated sites can be screened out where they are designated for geological features where there are no habitat or species sensitive to nitrogen or acid deposition.

The variation in January 2025 added a poultry housing unit at the area known as Marchwood, with total free range laying hens as 128,000 birds.

However, the Marchwood shed was never built and HA Blackwood wish to change the location of this shed to a new area at Greenside. A separate partial surrender application has been submitted to remove Marchwood from the permit with this variation application submitted to add the new shed to the area of Greenside. There are 32,000 places for laying hens in each of the 4 housing units currently on the permit. The new Greenside housing unit will have places for 32,000 laying hens.

The proposal in this variation, moves the source further away from the boundary of Muirkirk uplands SSSI, Greenside is 20m closer to Airds Moss SAC which is not considered to be significant. The applicant used a SCAIL comparison to show that for the same number of birds (32k) Greenside shows a reduced impact on the Muirkirk and North Lowther Uplands SPA and Muirkirk Uplands SSSI.



The SCAIL inputs only included the new shed to assess the impact alone as all other sources were accepted to be in the background since they have been operational since before December 2021.

The emission factor used was 0.0518 which reflects 90/10% split in ranging and housing and mitigation in the form of belt drying of manure with a corresponding reduction of 60%

Range - 0.239 (emission factor) x 0.1 (% time in range) = 0.0239 kg NH3/bird/yr
House - 0.073 (emission factor) x 0.9 (% time in house) = 0.0657
House manure drying reduction - 0.0657 - 60% = 0.02628
Combined = 0.0239 + 0.02628 = 0.05018 kg NH3/bird/year

The results in conservative mode show that the SCAIL thresholds were exceeded. In realistic mode SCAIL passed for ammonia but still exceeded for NDep and acid deposition.

The applicant also proposes to reduce emissions by reducing the crude protein content in feed.

The advice provided by SEPA's terrestrial ecologist at the time of the 2015 variation addition of Glenwood was based on visual inspection of the feature, they concluded that it was likely that areas of sensitive habitat up to 600 metres north, east, south and west of the proposed house would exceed the Critical Load.

At the time of assessment there were no other projects, either consented operational and consented not operational or in the planning permitting system since Dec 2021 which needed to be considered in combination with the Greenside emissions.

Since this proposal is further away from the designated site and mitigation has been applied in the form of belt drying and crude protein reductions SEPA has assessed that the proposal passes screening and further detailed assessment is not required.

Dust (PM10) (BAT 11)

Dust from poultry houses mainly originates from feathers, skin particles and used litter and to a lesser extent from feed and bedding.

PM10 dust particles (particulate matter 10 micrometres of less in diameter) are subject to statutory air quality standards. In Scotland, air quality objectives are set out in the Air Quality (Scotland) Regulations 2000 (as amended).

Where sensitive receptors are located within 250 metres of a poultry unit, SEPA requests that the applicant screens the emission of particulate matter to establish whether the emission will cause any air quality objectives to be breached.

There are no human health receptors within 250m of the Greenside area of Auldhouseburn Farm.

Therefore, SEPA has assessed the there is no change to the risk to human health as a result of this proposal.

Diesel Generator

It is a requirement of the animal welfare regulations that the birds have adequate heating and ventilation at all times. The site will be powered by mains electricity. However, in the event of a power failure, a back-up diesel generator will be used. SEPA are aware that diesel generators can give rise to dense fume, especially at start up, or if the generator is poorly maintained. SEPA would expect the operator to use BAT particularly with regard to servicing and maintenance to minimise visible emissions and particulates from the exhaust. The generator will be tested for a short period once per week.

The generator will have an internal bund and be located on a concrete plinth away from vehicle collision risk. A filling protocol will be in place and emergency absorbent material will be stored on site in the event of an accidental spill.

Monitoring

SEPA places a lot of emphasis on self-monitoring and record keeping to assess operational conditions and environmental performance. The operator is required within the permit to undertake odour and noise assessments. General monitoring of the site is also covered in the Permit to assess operational conditions and environmental performance.

Various permit conditions require the operator to monitor the level of inputs and the volume of outputs, to consider how changes made benefit the environment.

The 2017 BREF introduces the following additional monitoring requirements:

1. The total nitrogen and total phosphorus excreted in manure
2. Ammonia emissions to air
3. Dust emissions
4. Process parameters.

The European Commission during deliberations around the revised BREF, accepted the proposal from the UK Technical Working Group to estimate emissions by using DEFRA approved emission factors to comply with monitoring requirements for 1-3 above.

Fugitive emissions to air:

BAT 1 & 11

There are a few potential fugitive emissions to air. These include the release of dust and ammonia during cleaning or opening of the housing units for fallen stock removal, and from the birds themselves. SEPA accepts that some fugitive releases are unavoidable, for example, unplanned releases due to an unforeseen incident; others such as poor cleaning practices can be controlled through the relevant management techniques. SEPA views fugitive releases to air from these activities as an indication of process or maintenance issues and would require any defects to be reported and rectified as soon as possible.

SEPA seeks to reduce these occurrences by requiring operators to record maintenance issues and demonstrate a high degree of environmental management over the activities they undertake. SEPA has a number of regulatory instruments it can use to gain compliance should the operator fail to comply.

- Manure will be managed through a regular removal process using automated manure belts to designated collection points. Manure will be dried on the manure belts using forced ventilation. The manure will be placed in covered trailers and transported to the covered manure store.
- Forced air drying is to be continuous while the poultry house is in operation.
- Litter is removed by contractor in covered trailers in accordance with the manure management plan.
- Feed bins will be fitted with cyclone particle containment and mitigation to contain dust emissions as per the requirement in BAT 11.

SEPA does not have any specific policies in relation to bioaerosols from IA processes. There are currently no health criteria values available for interpreting the results of bioaerosol monitoring.

Routine monitoring would be required at receptors within 250 metres should appropriate criteria for assessment be identified.

Odour:

BAT 1, 12 & 13

SEPA has identified potential odour issues from intensive poultry farms. These include ammonia and odours from chlorinated cleaning materials or disinfectants to clean the housing units.

SEPA acknowledges that odour from intensive farming installations can give rise to complaints and requires operators to undertake odour assessments, and to formulate and implement an Odour Management Plan to reduce the impact on the local environment.

BAT 1 requires the permit holder to produce an Odour Management Plan having regard to BAT 12 detailing odour techniques and reduction of odour emissions in accordance with BAT 13.

An odour management plan is in place for this site and will be expanded to incorporate the new housing unit at Greenside. The permit requires that offensive odours are not emitted beyond the site boundary.

Emissions to Water and Monitoring (where relevant)

Point Source Emissions to Surface Water and Sewer:

There shall be no direct point source emissions to surface water from any part of the permitted activities.

The applicant has proposed a Sustainable Drainage System (Rural SuDS) designed to comply with the CREW Rural SuDS Guide (Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems: A Practical Design and Build Guide for Scotland's Farmers and Landowners) (CREW), considered BAT for intensive agriculture installations. An upgrade condition will be added to the permit to ensure that the swales are adequately sized and located prior to operation at the Greenside housing unit.

If maintained properly, the swales will provide sufficient treatment of all lightly contaminated run off so that this is not considered to be a point source discharge to surface water.

Point Source Emissions to Groundwater:

There shall be no direct point source emissions to soil or groundwater from any part of the permitted activities. The applicant has proposed a Sustainable Drainage System (Rural SuDS) designed to comply with the CREW Rural SuDS Guide (Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems: A Practical Design and Build Guide for Scotland's Farmers and Landowners) (CREW), considered BAT for intensive agriculture installations. If maintained properly, the swales will provide sufficient treatment of all lightly contaminated run off so that this is not considered to be a point source discharge to ground water.

Fuel storage (emergency generator) will be appropriately bunded inspected and maintained.

Wash water will be collected and contained in compliant tanks with suitable capacity for one wash out cycle.

The Site and Baseline Report will be submitted prior to the house operation once the housing unit has been constructed. This report will evaluate past potential contamination and future pollution risks to both soil and groundwater. A condition has been added to the permit.

Routine Soil (by 30/08/2029 and every 10 years) and Groundwater (every five years) monitoring is required by the permit.

Fugitive Emissions to Water:

(BAT 1 & 6)

There are several potential sources which could lead to fugitive emissions to water. These include, poorly maintained surfaces and drainage systems, bird delivery and collection, and lack of care during cleaning of the housing units, all of which can lead to contamination of surface waters.

SEPA views fugitive releases as avoidable and can usually link these incidents to either operational error or negligence. SEPA seeks to reduce these occurrences by requiring the permit holder to implement BAT and to provide training to relevant staff in environmental issues, exercising a high degree of environmental management, and continual maintenance of the activities they undertake.

The applicant is installing SuDS at the new housing unit, which has been designed to be fit-for-purpose and meets BAT. An upgrade condition will be added to the permit to ensure that it is adequately sized and located.

Noise Emissions and Monitoring

BAT 9 & 10

The predominant source of noise from poultry housing units is generated from the ventilation systems. Other sources of noise related to this type of activity can include vehicle movements in and around the site and the placement and removal of the birds. The latter two are considered unlikely to cause issues as these activities will take place for such short durations as well as being infrequent. Routine maintenance of fans will also prevent noise, and the noise management plan will address any issues that should arise and will be updated as stipulated in the permit.

The Permit recognises that noise can give rise to complaints.

The Noise Management Plan is included with the application and will be updated to include the new housing unit on site. The permit requires that noise, which has a significant impact on the environment, people or property, is not emitted beyond the site boundary. The nearest noise sensitive receptor to the proposed houses is a residential house >600m away.

The operator is required to undertake noise assessments and update the Noise Management Plan to prevent or minimise the impact on the local environment. In the event of a substantiated noise complaint, the plan will be reviewed and appropriate action taken.

Resource Utilisation and Monitoring
Water use:
BAT 5 Water use within the food production sector is primarily an animal welfare issue as the operator of the installation is required under other legislation to provide an adequate supply of clean water for both the welfare of the birds and to undertake adequate cleaning of vehicles. It is up to the operator to demonstrate the use of BAT to minimise water usage, but SEPA does directly regulate water use through permit conditions requiring the operator to minimise water consumption and explore options for minimisation, and to report consumption in the resource efficiency report. The greatest volume of water consumed is drinking water for the birds. Fresh mains water will be delivered to poultry via nipple drinkers with drip collection cups to prevent spillages (as outlined in the BAT standards) thereby reducing wastage and ensuring dry litter. There is no water storage within the new housing unit. Water is also used for cleaning the poultry units at the end of the cycle. The housing units are washed down and disinfected before the introduction of the next flock. Drinking water equipment is monitored as required for hygiene and animal welfare purposes. Water leakages are repaired as required. Water consumption is recorded and reported to SEPA as required in line with existing permit conditions.
Energy use and generation:
BAT 8 Ventilation systems are computer controlled and optimised to minimise energy use whilst maintaining welfare standards. High efficiency ventilation will be installed, and the new house will be insulated with insulation in the roof and insulation to side walls. All lighting in the new houses will use LED Lighting. SEPA recognises that energy usage is dependent on several factors outwith the control of the operator who has to maintain the welfare of the birds in extremes of weather. A permit condition requiring the formal systematic assessment of energy consumption on site requires the operator to identify where efficiencies can be made. The primary source of electricity will be mains electricity and roof based photo-voltaic cells of 200Kw. A standby diesel generator (<1MW) will supply back-up power in the event of a mains outage.
Raw Materials Selection and Use:
All applicants applying to vary an EASR permit are required to examine their Raw Materials usage and seek ways to reduce their impact on the environment. The standard permit condition requiring the formal assessment of resource utilisation on site will require the operator to identify where any efficiencies can be made and demonstrate continuing improvement.

Chemicals:
Chemicals used in poultry rearing include cleaning and disinfection chemicals, pesticides, rodenticides, herbicides, insecticides and fungicides. All of these chemicals are required to be DEFRA approved. Once onsite, chemicals will be contained in the bunded, secure cabinets in the central packing area. Procedures are in place to absorb any spillage and ensure appropriate disposal.

Pesticides
Rodenticides are used as needed in bait boxes. They are kept in a locked store cupboard.

Veterinary Medicines:
Veterinary medicines are not stored on site and brought onto site as and when required.

Diesel:
Diesel is stored within the bunded generator itself and there is no separate storage on site. The generator has a 100-litre capacity. It is sited on a concrete plinth away from vehicle collision risk. The fuel storage is compliant with EASR Water General Binding Rule 28.

A filling protocol will be in place and emergency absorbent material will be available in the event of an accidental spill.

Water:
Water is sourced from the mains network. Water is used to supply drinking water to the birds and for washing down the housing units at depletion. Water consumption is monitored.

Feed (BAT 3 & 4):
Feed will be supplied to the site, pre-mixed, into fully enclosed silos each fitted with cyclone particle containment and mitigation and protected from vehicle collision. Feed will then be transported into the feed chain systems by augers. Any feed spillages will be cleared up immediately to prevent any potential contamination of ground water or watercourses and to deter pests.

Rations are formulated by poultry nutritionists. Three different diets are provided so that crude protein in diet is reduced as the birds age. The first two diets contain 17% crude protein and the last has 16%. A nutritionist is employed to review and optimise diets.

The maximum feed stored on the Greenside area of the Farm is 16 tonnes (Maximum across the housing units at the Farm is 64 tonnes).

SEPA is satisfied that this meets the requirements of BAT.

Litter:
Wood shavings will be used as bedding litter at the beginning of each flock cycle and topped up as required. Litter is brought onsite as required and no additional litter is stored onsite.

Waste Management, Handling and Monitoring
Waste Minimisation:

As a commercial operation, SEPA believes it is in the interest of both the company and the environment to minimise waste on the site, as a result SEPA encourages all intensive farming sites to examine their Raw Materials usage and seek ways to reduce their impact on the environment.

Standard permit conditions require the operator to minimise waste and where possible develop and implement recycling or recovery strategies. Records will be kept on site of all waste streams and the source, quantity and disposal routes taken. This data will be reviewed every four years in the resource efficiency report required in the permit.

It is not anticipated that there will be much waste generated by the site. Packaging such as plastic, paper and cardboard will be sent for recycling as appropriate.

Waste Handling:

Foot baths are located at various locations around the site and are changed twice per week. The foot baths have lids and will therefore not overtop in wet weather. Spent disinfectant will be disposed of into the underground wash water tank.

Underground wash water storage tanks will be used to collect contaminated water from the poultry housing cleaning process. The wash water will be spread to land outwith the permitted installation. The wash water tanks must be inspected routinely to ensure their integrity.

It is inevitable that a small number of eggs will end up in the litter and manure within poultry housing and will result in waste eggs being spread to land out with the permitted installation with the litter and manure, but the volume should be minimal and is considered by SEPA to be unavoidable.

Liquid egg and broken shelled eggs removed from the poultry houses will be collected in a bucket and incinerated.

Adding waste/broken eggs to the litter or manure after the eggs have been removed from the bird area, for example from grading/sorting facilities and packing stations, changes the status of the litter and manure and it all becomes a waste which will need to be collected and disposed of by an authorised waste contractor.

Waste/broken eggs must be collected, stored and disposed of appropriately. Broken eggs are a CAT 3 waste. If there is no facility on site to handle broken eggs the following procedure should be followed:

- Collect broken eggs in a plastic lined bucket / bin.
- Freeze in the plastic liner (in the fallen stock freezer is ok).
- Arrange for uplift as required by an authorised CAT 3 waste contractor

Hen manure will be removed twice weekly via muck belts and stored in a covered trailer before being transported to the covered manure store. All litter is transported off-site in covered trailers.

Mortalities are collected daily and transported to the incinerator. There is a sealed storage box at the incinerator. Incinerator ash (approximately 360kg per year) is stored in a covered container

within the incinerator building and collected by a registered waste carrier and animal by-product collection centre. All disposal of carcasses will be undertaken in accordance with the Animal By-Products (Enforcement)(Scotland) Regulations 2013.

The volume of other wastes stored on the site is minimal and all will be considered in the relevant section of the resource efficiency assessment required under the standard permit condition. The onus of Duty of Care shall apply to all waste management at the installation. The Duty of Care required under section 34(7) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as amended) is a statutory duty which must be complied with by anyone who produces, keeps, imports or manages controlled waste in Scotland.

No changes to other waste management practices are expected. General waste, including paper towels and personal waste are disposed of with general farm waste.

Waste Recovery or Disposal:

As above.

Site Condition Report, Baseline Report and Soil and Groundwater Monitoring (where relevant)

A site report and baseline report covering the new area at Greenside was provided with the application. The farm buildings at Greenside have not been inhabited since the 1960's and are now in ruins. There are no plans to re-develop these buildings. The land is currently in use for livestock farming. The site is not within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone.

The site report states that there have been no known hazardous substances with potentially polluting potential stored or used on the land and there have been no known spills accidents or pollution incidents to date.

There does not appear to be any publicly available borehole records for this site and no intrusive surveys have been completed by the operator at this site to date. All chemicals will be stored within secured and bunded chemical store indoors.

There have been no site investigations to date. However, sampling of agreed locations must be completed in order to determine a baseline prior to operation. An upgrade condition has been added to the permit to reflect this. Sample results must be presented with interpretation in a baseline report including soil and groundwater measurements of relevant hazardous substances used, produced or released during the course of the activity as set out in IND-G-012.

Once the new swales have been constructed at Greenside, the discharge points will be routinely sampled and results will be submitted to SEPA. All future monitoring will include these additional sample locations.

Given the low level of risk posed by the installation SEPA have imposed the minimum frequency of soil and ground water monitoring, following initial sampling at the new swale area, of 10 and five years respectively.

Consideration of Appropriate Measures and BAT

The BAT Reference Document (BREF) for the Intensive Rearing of Poultry and Pigs published by the European IPPC Bureau in 2017 has been used to assess this application against each BAT conclusion.

The variation application indicates that the new housing unit will be operated in accordance with Best Available Techniques (BAT) and all relevant BATCs will be complied with.

12. Consideration of Environmental Impact Assessment

For Schedule 20 - 24 activities, if an applicant has confirmed to us in the application that the proposal is subject to an environmental impact assessment under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017, then we must record how we have considered any relevant information obtained or conclusions arrived at from the EIA.

Was the activity to which this application relates to, subject to an EIA?	No
Please record what "*relevant information or conclusions*" associated with the EIA were submitted with the application by the applicant.	
N/A Screening opinion 20.0001/EIASCR no requirement to undertake Environmental Impact Assessment.	
Please record how you considered this information in the determination of the application.	
N/A	

13. Extension to the permit determination time

Has an extension to the permit determination period been requested?	No
Did the applicant provide written agreement to extend the determination period?	Choose an item.
Where agreed has the permissioning platform been updated?	Choose an item.
Where the applicant has not given written agreement to extend the determination period, have they notified SEPA that they wish the application to be deemed refused?	Choose an item.
Comments:	
N/A	

14. Details of the draft permit

Do you propose placing any non-standard conditions in the permit?	No
Do you propose making changes to existing text, tables or diagrams within the permit?	Yes

Outline the changes required and provide justification below:

Condition Number:	Justification:
1.1.4.1	Increase to four housing units with capacity of 128,000 birds - adding in a new housing unit at Greenside
1.2	Site plan to be updated to include the new housing unit at the Greenside area
1.2.5	Addition of new Greenside detailed layout plan
1.3	Delete and replace location plan to show both the original and new Greenside area
2.3.2	Addition of new condition to have forced air drying of manure on belts continually operational whilst the poultry house is stocked.
Table 2.1	Delete line in Reporting and Notification Requirements table
Table 2.1	Addition of 3 new information to be reported to table.
Conditions 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5	These conditions are deleted and replaced with new conditions 3.3 and 3.4, which include new Tables 3.2 and 3.3. This is in-line with SEPA's decision to remove back-up generators and incinerators emissions ELVs and conditions and use a condition for no visible emissions instead.

15. Informal Consultation with Applicant/Authorised Person

Has informal consultation with the applicant/authorised person on the draft determination been carried out?	Yes
Draft sent to the applicant:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Date given to return comments:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Date Comments returned:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Summary of contents and SEPAs response giving justification	
TBC	

16. Public Consultation on SEPA's Draft Decision

Was Public Consultation on the draft decision undertaken?	Yes
Date draft determination placed on SEPA's Website:	11/06/2026
Date public consultation on draft consultation closed:	Click or tap to enter a date.

Details of any other 'appropriate means' used to advertise the draft. Seek advice from the communication department	
Have all individuals who responded to the consultation on the application been informed of our draft decision?	Choose an item.
Were representations received?	Choose an item.
Summary of responses and how they were considered:	

17. Final Decision

Outcome:	Grant
If "**Refuse**" or "**Grant in Part**" summarise the grounds for refusal:	