

# Briefing 3: Lower Hare Landfill Site

Permit Number: EPR/LB3502HT/A001

28 January 2025

This briefing note updates you on our determination of the environmental permit that GRS Stone Supplies Ltd have applied for, to operate a landfill site at Lower Hare Farm. We explain the next phase of public consultation and how you can have your say.

## Summary

- GRS Stone Supplies Ltd (GRS) have applied for a permit to operate a landfill site at Lower Hare Farm in Whitestone, near Exeter.
- We held our first public consultation between 21 March and 15 May 2024 and a second public consultation between 15 July and 27 August 2024 to ask for your comments.
- We have received 159 responses to these consultations in total.
- We have carefully considered all of the documents provided to us by GRS, as well as your consultation comments, we have no evidence that would cause us to refuse the permit application.
- We think we may grant the permit to GRS; this is called a 'minded to' decision.
- We have written a draft permit document and a draft decision document. We welcome your comments on these documents in our third consultation, **deadline 10 March 2025, 11:59pm**.
- We will make our final decision after this date and once we have reviewed all the comments we receive.

## Introduction

We have reviewed all the comments you sent us, along with the documents submitted by GRS, and have considered all the evidence very carefully. As part of this consideration, we have explored several issues of concern, including the site stability and if there is a risk of pollution to nearby watercourses, which we know are of particular concern to you.

The permit GRS has applied for would allow them to accept soil, stones, bricks, tiles and ceramics into the landfill site. These could come from sources like construction and demolition sites and gardens and parks. The permit would only allow the site to accept [inert waste](#).

Granting a permit to GRS will allow us to regulate the site. It would require the operator to use appropriate preventative measures to monitor and control issues such as dust, noise or particulate emissions and minimise the risk of pollution. It will also contain numerical limits for other emissions.

If the operator does not meet the requirements in their permit, we can take action against them. This can range from providing advice and guidance and requiring them to put things right to taking legal action.

We are now satisfied we have all the information we think we need and cannot find any reason to refuse this permit application. **We are therefore now 'minded to' grant this permit to GRS.**



This means we think we may grant the permit based on what we know so far, but we have yet to make a final decision. Before we do, we would like you to read our draft decision document, and let us know if there is any further information you would like us to consider.

## The draft documents

We have written two documents, the Draft Decision Document and the Draft Permit. The draft decision document explains our thought process and how we have taken on board the comments you sent us in the first two consultations. The draft permit outlines the conditions the operator would have to meet.

In these documents we frequently say 'we have decided'. This gives the impression that our mind is already made up, but as we have explained above, we have not yet done so. The language enables them to become the final documents with no more re-drafting than is necessary.

## How have we reached our decision so far?

The application has been technically assessed by experienced specialist officers in our Environment Agency (EA) National Permitting Service as well as other experts in our Environment and Business and Devon, Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Industry Regulation team. We have gathered comments from all relevant parts of the EA, our statutory consultees and other interested parties.

We have checked that the operator will use appropriate preventative measures to monitor and control issues such as dust, noise or particulate emissions, so that any risk of pollution is minimised. In doing this we have reviewed how the site will be operated, and whether it will have any impact on people living nearby and natural habitats. We have also consulted with a number of partner organisations and the responses we received are included within the draft decision document.

Amongst other documents submitted to us by GRS, we have reviewed the stability risk assessment and hydrogeological risk assessment, as we know you have concerns about springs underneath the proposed site. We are satisfied that the risk of land movement as a result of developing the land into a landfill site is low, but we encourage you to read about this in more detail in our draft decision document.

We have also considered the risk of pollution to nearby watercourses, especially from sediment suspended in water running off the site after rainfall. Our draft permit contains numerical limits which GRS will have to meet. They will need to put in measures to control this run off and allow sediment to settle out in lagoons before it reaches the watercourse. If we are not happy that they are doing this, and are therefore allowing the watercourse to become polluted, we can take enforcement action against them.

We are bound by the requirements of the [Regulator's Code](#) to grant permits to companies, provided we do not find any evidence that the building or operation of such a site may cause significant harm to the environment or to human health.



## How can you comment on the consultation?

Our third consultation is now open and we invite you to comment on the draft decision document, draft permit and any other documents we have made available to you over the last few years. You can do so by:

Visiting our online Citizen Space web page: <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/psc/ex4-2hw-grs-stone-supplies-limited-epr-lb3502ht-a>.

Emailing us at: [pscpublicresponse@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:pscpublicresponse@environment-agency.gov.uk)

Posting your response to us at: **Environment Agency Permitting and Support Centre, Land Team, Quadrant 2, 99 Parkway Avenue, Sheffield, S9 4WF.**

We welcome feedback from everyone who has a view on the application, regardless of their age, sex, disability, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, race, religion or belief or their sexual orientation.

If you need any of the documents in another format, or have issues with accessing the Citizen Space page, please either phone us on **03708 506 506** or email us at [DCISEnquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:DCISEnquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk).

**We must receive your comments by 11:59pm on 10 March 2025.**

Please note that our permitting process does not take into account factors such as off-site vehicle movements, operating hours, visual impact and whether this is an appropriate location for the activity.

## What happens next?

We will consider all relevant comments we receive during this third consultation. Your comments may affect our decision so we will make our final decision once the consultation has closed and we will use your comments to inform us. You can let us know if you would like your comments to be made public when you submit your response on our Citizen Space consultation portal, or in the text of your email or letter.

Your comments will need to provide us with new information that would cause us to reconsider our decision. The information we are already aware of is outlined and considered in the draft decision document. If no new information comes to light, we will issue the permit to GRS after the close of the consultation.

If we decide to refuse the permit to GRS, they have the right to appeal our decision.

## How can I get further information?

Keep an eye on our local social media channel:

[Environment AgencySW \(@EnvAgencySW\) / X](#)

For more general information about our permitting process please see [www.gov.uk/topic/environmental-management/environmental-permits](http://www.gov.uk/topic/environmental-management/environmental-permits)

If you would like to be added to or removed from our mailing list for this application, please email us at [DCISEnquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:DCISEnquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk) or write to us at **Customer and Engagement Team, Manley House, Kestrel Way, Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter, EX2 7LQ.**

