

What happens to your consultation response?

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this consultation. We know people care deeply about their local environment, and your views help us make informed decisions that protect people, wildlife and water.

When a consultation closes, our permitting team gathers every response received through the online portal, by post and by email. They read every response and group comments into themes. Some responses may contribute to more than one theme.

As we review responses, we consider:

- Whether the issue falls within the Environment Agency's regulatory role or another organisation's responsibilities.
- Whether evidence has been provided to support the comments.
- Whether the response contains new information we do not already hold.
- Whether that information affects our assessment of the application against environmental standards and legal requirements, including impacts on people, wildlife and protected waters.



The most helpful responses focus on the content of the permit application as well as issues that fall within our regulatory role. This helps us assess the application fairly and make decisions based on relevant environmental evidence.

While we cannot reply to every individual response, we will address the themes raised in our draft decision document. Where comments relate to matters outside our regulatory responsibilities, we will explain this clearly.

For consultations that attract significant public interest, we may carry out a second consultation on our draft decision. We do this when we are minded to issue a permit. This gives you the opportunity to review the draft permit and decision document and see how your consultation responses have informed our assessment. You can also provide further comments at this stage.

We assess comments from any further consultation in the same way. If we receive new information that affects our assessment, we will update the draft decision document to reflect it.

We must follow the Regulator's Code, which requires us to support those we regulate to comply with the law and improve their environmental performance. This means we can only refuse a permit where there is evidence that the application does not meet legal, policy or environmental requirements.

If the evidence shows that we cannot issue the permit, we will refuse the application. In these circumstances, there would be no further consultation. The applicant would have the right to appeal our decision.

To report environmental problems please visit www.gov.uk/report-environmental-problem or call the incident hotline on **0800 80 70 60**