

# A Report on the Modelling of the Dispersion and Deposition of Ammonia from the Existing and Proposed Free Range Egg Laying Chicken Houses at East House Farm, Trimdon Village in County Durham

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2nd February 2023

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# Introduction

AS Modelling & Data Ltd. has been instructed by Mr. Steve Raasch, on behalf of E. M. and S. E. Carter, to use computer modelling to assess the impact of ammonia emissions from the existing and proposed free range egg-laying chicken houses at East House Farm, Trimdon Village in County Durham. TS29 6NH.

Ammonia emission rates from the existing and proposed poultry houses have been assessed and quantified based upon the Environment Agency’s standard ammonia emission factors. The ammonia emission rates have then been used as inputs to an atmospheric dispersion and deposition model which calculates ammonia exposure levels and nitrogen and acid deposition rates in the surrounding area.

This report is arranged in the following manner:

* Section 2 provides relevant details of the farm and potentially sensitive receptors in the area.
* Section 3 provides some general information on ammonia; details of the method used to estimate ammonia emissions, relevant guidelines and legislation on exposure limits and where relevant, details of likely background levels of ammonia.
* Section 4 provides some information about ADMS, the dispersion model used for this study and details the modelling procedure.
* Section 5 contains the results of the modelling.
* Section 6 provides a discussion of the results and conclusions.

# Background Details

The site of the poultry houses at East House Farm is in a rural area approximately 1 km to the east of Trimdon Village, in County Durham. The surrounding land is used predominantly for arable or fodder production, there are also some pasture and isolated woodlands nearby. The farm is at an altitude of around 135 m in an elevated area with incised rivers and streams, notably the River Skerne which is approximately 800 m to the north and flows into the Hurworth Burn Reservoir, which is approximately 2.5 km to the east.

There are currently four poultry houses at East House Farm (two are an adjoined pair), which provide accommodation for up to 60,000 free range egg-laying chickens. Under the proposals, an additional adjoined pair of poultry houses, which would provide accommodation for up to 64,000 free range egg-laying chickens, would be constructed on a green-field site to the south-east of the existing poultry houses.

The existing poultry houses are all ventilated using gable end fans. One of the houses, known as House 3, is a flat-deck, deep litter house, whilst the remaining three, known as Houses 4, 5 and 6, are aviary system houses, with frequent removal of droppings using manure belts. There are pop holes along the sides of the existing poultry houses which provide daytime access to outdoor ranging areas.

The proposed poultry houses, referred to as Houses 7 and 8, would be ventilated by high speed roof fans, each with a short chimney and would be aviary system houses, with a manure belt drying system to reduce ammonia emissions. There would be pop holes along the sides of the proposed poultry houses which would provide daytime access to outdoor ranging areas.

There is also a manure storage area, or building, to the east of Houses 3 and 4.

There are four areas designated as Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) within 2 km (the normal screening distance for non-statutory sites) of the poultry houses at East House Farm. The are also ten areas that are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within 5 km of the site (the normal screening distance for a SSSI). There are numerous other SSSIs, some of which are also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Area (SPA) and/or a Ramsar Site, within 10 km of the farm (the normal screen distance for internationally designated sites). Some further details of the statutory sites are provided below.

* **Charity Land SSSI** - approximately 1.6 km to the north-west - A damp field.
* **Fishburn Grassland SSSI** - approximately 2.4 km to the west-south-west - Nationally rare grassland.
* **Pike Whin SSSI** - approximately 2.6 km to the east - Wetland bog.
* **Trimdon Limestone Quarry SSSI** - approximately 3.1 km to the west-north-west - Geological and botanical designation, grassland.
* **Raisby Hill Quarry SSSI** - approximately 3.5 km to the west-north-west - Geological designation, no nitrogen sensitive features.
* **Raisby Hill Grassland SSSI** - approximately 5.2 km to the west-north-west - Scrubby wetland and tributary embankment.
* **Town Kelloe Bank SSSI** - approximately 4.5 km to the north-north-west - Scrubby grassland.
* **Wingate Quarry SSSI** - approximately 4.0 km to the north-north-west - Scrubby grassland.
* **The Bottoms SSSI** - approximately 4.9 km to the north-north-west - Scrubby herb-rich grassland.
* **Quarrington Hill Grasslands SSSI** - approximately 6.1 km to the north-west - Scrubby grassland.
* **Cassop Vale SSSI** - approximately 6.5 km to the north-west - Scrubby grassland.
* **Crime Rigg Quarry SSSI** - approximately 8.7 km to the north-north-west - Geological designation, no nitrogen sensitive features.
* **Sherburn Hill SSSI** - approximately 9.8 km to the north-north-west - Scrubby grassland.
* **Tuthill Quarry SSSI** - approximately 9.2 km to the north - Scrubby grassland.
* **Dabble Bank SSSI** - approximately 10.1 km to the north-north-west - Scrubby grassland.
* **Yoden Village Quarry SSSI** - approximately 9.3 km to the north-north-east - Geological designation, no nitrogen sensitive features.
* **Durham Coast SSSI/SAC** - approximately 9.1 km to the north-east - Considerable biological, geological and pysiographic interest, with species-rich dune system and nationally important wintering bird populations.
* **Hulam Fen SSSI** - approximately 6.3 km to the east-north-east - Marshy grassland.
* **Hart Bog SSSI** - approximately 6.7 km to the east-north-east - A small topogenous mire noted for mosses.
* **Railway Stell West SSSI** - approximately 9.2 km to the south-west - Fenland ditch.
* **Bishop Middleham Quarry SSSI** - approximately 5.3 km to the west - Scrubby grassland.
* **The Carrs SSSI** - approximately 8.4 km to the west - Mixed woodland and grassland.
* **Castle Eden Dene SSSI/SAC** - approximately 5.6 km to the north-north-east - Species-rich wooded dene noted for rare and localised lily-of-the-valley and orchids.
* **Thrislington Plantation SSSI/SAC** - approximately 6.7 km to the west - Scrubby grassland.
* **Northumbria Coast SPA/Ramsar Site** - approximately 9.9 km to the east-north-east - An important coastal habitat for wintering and breeding birds.

Maps of the surrounding area showing the positions of the poultry houses and the nearby wildlife sites are provided in Figures 1a and 1b. In the figures, the LWSs are shaded in yellow, the SSSIs are shaded in green, the SACs are shaded in purple, the SPA is shaded in orange, the Ramsar Site is shaded in blue and the positions of the existing and proposed poultry houses are outlined in blue.

*Figure 1a. The area surrounding the site, with concentric circles radii 2.5 km (olive), 5.5 km (green) and 10.5 km (purple)*Map

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*Figure 1b. The area surrounding the site, a closer view*

Map

Description automatically generated

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# Ammonia, Background Levels, Critical Levels & Loads & Emission Rates

## 3.1 Ammonia concentration and nitrogen and acid deposition

When assessing potential impact on ecological receptors, ammonia concentration is usually expressed in terms of micrograms of ammonia per metre cubed of air (µg-NH3/m3) as an annual mean. Ammonia in the air may exert direct effects on the vegetation, or indirectly affect the ecosystem through deposition which causes both hyper-eutrophication (excess nitrogen enrichment) and acidification of soils. Nitrogen deposition, specifically in this case the nitrogen load due to ammonia deposition/absorption, is usually expressed in kilograms of nitrogen per hectare per year (kg-N/ha/y). Acid deposition is expressed in terms of kilograms equivalent (of H+ ions) per hectare per year (keq/ha/y).

## 3.2 Background ammonia levels and nitrogen and acid deposition

The source of the background figures is the Air Pollution Information System (APIS, January 2023, source attribution data 2017 - 2019). It should be noted that the APIS background levels used are an average over a 5 km grid square (they are also modelled values, they are not measured in any way and no particular farms are included explicitly in the sources attribution data). Ammonia levels vary markedly over relatively short distances and the APIS website itself notes that, the background values cannot be considered representative on any particular location within the 5 km grid square.

Please note that, although previous gross errors have been recently corrected (January 2023), the most recent 1 km resolution data from APIS is not used as there is no proper documentation of the processes used to derive the data and AS Modelling & Data Ltd. continues to have considerable doubts about the veracity of these data, particularly as there is no source data that could be used to derive 1 km resolution data (the source attribution data is stated to be at 0.1 degree resolution, approximately 10 km). It should be noted that ammonia levels vary markedly over relatively short distances and large sources that should be apparent at 1 km resolution (if the 1 km data were valid) are not apparent. Additionally, there are marked differences to the older 5 km resolution data that are thus far unexplained and do not appear to have any rational explanation.

The APIS background ammonia concentration (annual mean) in the area East House farm is 2.3 µg-NH3/m3. The background nitrogen deposition rate to woodland is 33.0 kg‑N/ha/y and to short vegetation is 19.5 kg-N/ha/y. The background acid deposition rates are no longer provided in APIS.

## 3.3 Critical Levels & Critical Loads

Critical Levels and Critical Loads are a benchmark for assessing the risk of air pollution impacts to ecosystems. It is important to distinguish between a Critical Level and a Critical Load. The **Critical Level** is the gaseous **concentration** of a pollutant in the air, whereas the **Critical Load** relates to the quantity of pollutant **deposited** from air to the ground.

Critical Levels are defined as, "concentrations of pollutants in the atmosphere above which direct adverse effects on receptors, such as human beings, plants, ecosystems or materials, may occur according to present knowledge" (UNECE).

Critical Loads are defined as, "a quantitative estimate of exposure to one or more pollutants below which significant harmful effects on specified sensitive elements of the environment do not occur according to present knowledge" (UNECE).

For ammonia concentration in air, the Critical Level for higher plants is 3.0 µg-NH3/m3 as an annual mean. For sites where there are sensitive lichens and bryophytes present, or where lichens and bryophytes are an integral part of the ecosystem, the Critical Level is 1.0 µg-NH3/m3 as an annual mean.

Critical Loads for nutrient nitrogen are set under the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution. They are based on empirical evidence, mainly observations from experiments and gradient studies. Critical Loads are given as ranges (e.g. 10-20 kg-N/ha/y); these ranges reflect variation in ecosystem response across Europe.

The Critical Levels and Critical Loads at the wildlife sites assumed in this study are provided in Table 1. N.B. Where the Critical Level of 1.0 µg-NH3/m3 is assumed, it is usually unnecessary to consider the Critical Load as the Critical Level provides the stricter test. However, it may be necessary to consider nitrogen deposition should a Critical Load of 5.0 kg-N/ha/y be appropriate. Normally, the Critical Load for nitrogen deposition provides a stricter test than does the Critical Load for acid deposition.

*Table 1. Critical Levels and Critical Loads at the wildlife sites*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Site | Critical Level  (µg-NH3/m3) | Critical Load Nitrogen Deposition  (kg-N/ha/y) | Critical Load  Acid Deposition  (keq/ha/y) |
| LWSs | 1.0 1 | - | - |
| Pike Whin Bog SSSI; Hart Bog SSSI | 1.0 1 & 2 | 10.0 2 & 3 | - |
| Castle Eden Dene SSSI/SAC | 1.0 1 & 2 | 5.0 2, 3 & 5 | - |
| Raisby Hill Quarry SSSI; Crime Rigg Quarry SSSI; Yoden Village Quarry SSSI | n/a 2 & 4 | n/a 2 & 4 | n/a 2 & 4 |
| Fishburn Grassland SSSI; Trimdon Limestone Quarry SSSI; Raisby Hill Grassland SSSI; Town Kelloe Bank SSSI; The Bottoms SSSI; Quarrington Hill Grasslands SSSI; Sherburn Hill SSSI; Tuthill Quarry SSSI and Bishop Middleham Quarry SSSI | 3.0 2 & 4 | 15.0 2 & 3 | - |
| Wingate Quarry SSSI; Cassop Vale SSSI; Dabble Bank SSSI; Hulam Fen SSSI; Railway Stell West SSSI; The Carrs SSSI and Thrislington Plantation SSSI/SAC | 1.0 1 & 2 | 15.0 2 & 3 | - |
| Durham Coast SSSI/SAC & Northumbria Coast SPA/Ramsar | 1.0 1 & 2 | 8.0 2 & 3 | - |
| Charity Land SSSI | 3.0 2 | 20.0 2 & 3 | - |

1. A precautionary figure used where no details of the ecology of the site are available, or the citation for the site contains reference to sensitive lichens and/or bryophytes.
2. Based upon the citation for the site and information obtained from APIS.
3. The lower bound of the range of Critical Loads for habitats present at the site obtained from the APIS website.
4. No Critical Level and/or Load assigned to the site.
5. The lower bound is for coniferous woodland where lichens/free-living algae important features of the site. Lichens/free-living algae are not mentioned in the site citation.

## 3.4 Guidance on the significance of ammonia emissions

### 3.4.1 Environment Agency Criteria

The Environment Agency web-page titled “Intensive farming risk assessment for your environmental permit”, contains a set of criteria, with thresholds defined by percentages of the Critical Level or Critical Load, for: internationally designated wildlife sites (Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Ramsar sites); Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and other non-statutory wildlife sites. The lower and upper thresholds are: 4% and 20% for SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites; 20% and 50% for SSSIs and 100% and 100% for non-statutory wildlife sites. If the predicted process contributions to Critical Level or Critical Load are below the lower threshold percentage, the impact is usually deemed acceptable.

If the predicted process contributions to Critical Level or Critical Load are in the range between the lower and upper thresholds; 4% to 20% for SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites; 20% to 50% for SSSIs and 100% to 100% for other non-statutory wildlife sites, whether or not the impact is deemed acceptable is at the discretion of the Environment Agency. In making their decision, the Environment Agency will consider whether other farming installations might act in-combination with the farm and the sensitivities of the wildlife sites. In the case of LWSs and AWs, the Environment Agency do not usually consider other farms that may act in-combination and therefore a PC of up to 100% of Critical Level or Critical Load is usually deemed acceptable for permitting purposes and therefore the upper and lower thresholds are the same (100%).

### 3.4.2 Natural England advisory criteria

Natural England are a statutory consultee at planning and usually advise that, if predicted process contributions exceed 1% of Critical Level or Critical Load at a SSSI, SAC, SPA or Ramsar site, then the local authority should consider whether other farming installations1 might act in-combination or cumulatively with the farm and the sensitivities of the wildlife sites. However, Natural England’s advice is often rather contradictory and in other recent cases, they have advised a threshold of 4% for SSSIs.

1. The process contribution from most farming installations is already included in the background ammonia concentrations and nitrogen and acid deposition rates. Therefore, it is normally only necessary to consider new installations and installations with extant planning permission and proposed developments when understanding the additional impact of a proposal upon nearby ecologies. However, established farms in close proximity may need to be considered given the background concentrations and deposition rates are derived as an average for a 5 km by 5 km grid.

### 3.4.3 Environment Agency and Natural England May 2022 Air Quality Risk Assessment Interim Guidance

Although it seems important to include a reference to this document, it appears to be primarily about internal Environment Agency screening models and the SCAIL model and AS Modelling & Data Ltd. have been unable to draw any conclusions from the document as to what thresholds may or may not apply, nor in what circumstances the threshold may or may not apply.

### 3.4.4 Joint Nature Conservancy Committee - Guidance on Decision-making Thresholds for Air Pollution

In December 2021, the Joint Nature Conservancy Committee (JNCC) published a report titled, “Guidance on Decision-making Thresholds for Air Pollution” This report provides decision-making criteria to inform the assessment of air quality impacts on designated conservation sites. The criteria are intended to be applied to individual sources to identify those for which a decision can be taken without the need for further assessment effort.

The Decision-making thresholds (DMT) for on-site emission sources provided in the JNCC report are reproduced below:

* For lichens and bryophytes - 0.08%, 0.20%, 0.34% and 0.75% of the Critical Level for high, medium, low and very low development density areas, respectively.
* For higher plants - 0.08%, 0.20%, 0.34% and 0.75% of the Critical Level for high, medium, low and very low development density areas, respectively.
* For nitrogen deposition to woodland (Critical Load 10 kg-N/ha/y) - 0.13%, 0.34%, 0.57% and 1.30% of the Critical Level for high, medium, low and very low development density areas, respectively.
* For nitrogen deposition to grassland (Critical Load 10 kg-N/ha/y) 0.09%, 0.24%, 0.40% and 0.88% of the Critical Level for high, medium, low and very low development density areas, respectively.

Note that ‘development density’ is defined as, the assumed number of additional new sources below the DMT within 5 km of the proposed development over 13 years: very low density being 1 development; low 5 developments; medium 10 developments and high 30 developments.

Subject to some exceptions, where the process contribution from an on-site source is below the DMT, no further assessment is required. Where the process contribution exceeds the DMT there are two possible outcomes:

* Where site-relevant thresholds have been derived these can be applied to see if it is possible to avoid further assessment effort on the basis of site specific circumstances.
* If site-relevant thresholds have not yet been derived, further assessment in combination with other plans and projects is required.

## 3.5 Quantification of ammonia emissions

Ammonia emission rates from poultry houses and ranging areas depend on many factors and are likely to be highly variable. However, the benchmarks for assessing impacts of ammonia and nitrogen deposition are framed in terms of an annual mean ammonia concentration and annual nitrogen deposition rates. To obtain relatively robust figures for these statistics it is not necessary to model short term temporal variations and a steady continuous emission rate can be assumed. In fact, modelling short term temporal variations might introduce rather more uncertainty than modelling continuous emissions.

### 3.5.3 Ammonia emissions from the existing and proposed poultry houses

For free-range egg laying chickens, in an aviary system, where manure is removed frequently using a belt system, the Environment Agency standard emission factor is 0.08 kg-NH3/bird place/y. This figure is used for the existing poultry houses 4, 5 and 6 at East House Farm. For free-range egg laying chickens, in flat-deck, deep litter system, where manure collects within the housing and is only removed at the end of each flock cycle, the Environment Agency figure is 0.21 kg-NH3/bird place/y. This figure is used for the existing poultry house 3.

The proposed houses would employ manure drying technology and an emission factor of 0.025 kg-NH3/bird place/y has been suggested (based upon emission factors for similar systems in the Netherlands). However, for the purposes of this report, the Environment Agency figure is 0.08 kg-NH3/bird place/y is retained.

Previously, it has been customary to reduce housing emissions by a factor based upon the proportion of droppings estimated to occur during ranging. This practice is not followed in this case for two reasons: firstly, ammonia emissions are most probably more dependent on surface area than they are on the absolute amount of excreta and secondly, the emission factors used are already at the lower end of the range of likely emission rates from the types of housing under consideration in this case.

### 3.5.2 Ammonia emissions from ranging areas

As the birds have access to outdoor ranging areas, some of the birds’ droppings, which is the source of the ammonia, would be deposited on these ranging areas. In their pre-application screening report, the Environment Agency provide an emission factor or 0.225 kg-NH3/bird place/y (we assume this figure is based upon National Ammonia Emission Inventory figures for total N excreted, proportion of ammoniacal N and proportion of ammoniacal N released as ammonia and is for theoretical birds ranging 100% of the time). The Environment Agency also provide of estimate of 20% of birds ranging and 80% in the housing (we assume that this is an average figure when ranging is available and would note that this figure is at the high end of the range of observed range usage figures). Assuming average daily range availability of 8 hours per dayA the ammonia emission factor for the ranging is calculated to be 0.015 kg-NH3/bird place/y.

A. Ranging availability may be longer in the summer and shorter in winter. The unavailability of ranging due to inclement weather or disease control for example is not considered.

A series of other peer reviewed scientific papers have also been considered. The findings from these papers are summarised below. It should be noted thatthe Aarnink provides direct measurements of ammonia emissions from ranging areas and is in accord with the calculated figure:

1. **Larsen, H., Cronin, G.M., Gebhardt-Henrich, S., Smith, C.L. Hemsworth, P.H. and Rault, J-L. (2017) - Individual ranging behaviour patterns in commercial free-range layers as observed through RFID tracking. Animals, 7 (21).**

This paper is from Australian studies and given the very different climate regimes in the UK and Australia, there can be no expectation that bird behaviour would be similar. This aside:

The Simple Summary appears to indicate high range usage (68.6% in Flock A, and 82.2% in Flock B). However, it should be noted that these percentages are the percentages of hens that used the ranging at some point in time, they are not overall range usage figures, which is the number we need to determine.

At page 6 it is stated “Flock A spent a mean of 46 +/- 1.1 h ranging between a total duration of 34 s and 83 h outside over the 13 days, and hens in Flock B spent a mean of 30 +/- 0.7 h ranging between a total duration of 50 min and 57 h outside over the 10 days.”

So for Flock A the average range usage is - 68.6% x 46h/(24h x 13d) = **10.1%**

And for Flock B the average range usage is - 82.2% x 30h/(24h x 10d) = **10.3%**

It should also be noted that these figures do not account for days where ranging for any reason may not be available (disease control, inclement weather etc.).

1. **Campbell, D.L.M., Hinch, G.N., Dyall, T.R., Warin, L., Little, B.A. and Lee, C (2016) - Outdoor stocking density in free-range laying hens: radio-frequency identification of impacts on range use. Animal: 1 - 10.**

This paper is from New Zealand studies and given the potentially very different climate regimes in the UK and Australia, there can be no expectation that bird behaviour would be similar. This aside:

The abstract states the following “On average, 38% to 48% of hens were seen on the range simultaneously and used all available areas of all ranges”. However, these are the figures for when ranging is available.

On page 4, the range availability is given as from 0900 h (pop hole opening) to 1630 h (pop hole closing).

Therefore, range usage is between 38% x 6.5h / 24 h = **10.3 %** and 48% x 6.5h / 24 h = **13.0 %**

It should also be noted that these figures do not account for days where ranging for any reason may not be available (disease control, inclement weather etc.).

1. **Pettersson, I.C., Freire, R. and Nicol, C.J. (2016) - Factors affecting ranging behaviour in commercial free-range hens. World Poultry Science Journal, 72.**

This is a review of other papers.

It is not stated explicitly whether the figures from all papers are for range usage when ranging is available; however, since it appears to be common practice to express ranging use this way, we have assumed this is the case for all figures reported, except where it is stated otherwise.

It should be noted that the figures with the exception of one (Whay figures) from this report are all from smaller flocks. Figures from small flocks are included, but it should be fully acknowledged that ranging usage in smaller flocks may be higher than for large flocks.

Farmers estimates are excluded and measured figures only are used below:

Range availability is not stated (this may be available in source papers), but assumed to be 8 hours per day, this is likely to be a high figure.

The highest reported ranging usage figure is 57% (count from very small flock), which assuming 8h per day ranging gives an overall figure **of 19%**

The lowest reported ranging usage is 11% (lowest figure from 1000-16000 bird flocks) and the lowest, which assuming 8h per day ranging gives an overall figure of **3.7%**

The highest lowest reported ranging usage from 1000-16000 bird flocks is >25%, which assuming 8h per day ranging gives an overall figure of **>8.33%**

It should also be noted that these figures do not account for days where ranging for any reason may not be available (disease control, inclement weather etc.).

1. **L. Hegelund , J.T. Sørensen , J.B. Kjær & I.S. Kristensen b. Use of the range area in organic egg production systems: effect of climatic factors, flock size, age and artificial cover.**

This is a Danish study, but climate and housing/ranging systems are similar to the UK. This is an older study (late 90s) and the flocks were small (513 to 6000 individuals/flock). However, this is still a useful paper.

The paper stated that average range usage was 9% (11% for flocks with artificial cover on ranges).

These figures are range usage when ranging is available. Range availability is not stated, but if it is assumed to be 8 hours per day then the range usage is: 9% x 8h/24h = **3%**  and for birds with cover on ranges 11% x 8h/24h = **3.67%**

1. **Leonard Ikenna Chielo \*, Tom Pike and Jonathan Cooper Ranging Behaviour of Commercial Free-Range Laying Hens.**

This is a UK study with large flocks and typical housing/ranging systems, so should carry some weight.

The paper stated that average range usage was 12.5%

These figures are range usage when ranging is available. Range availability is stated as 7-9h. If it is assumed to be an average 8 hours per day then the range usage is: 12.5 % x 8h/24h = **4.17%**

It should also be noted that these figures do not account for days where ranging for any reason may not be available (disease control, inclement weather etc.).

1. **Pettersson paper 2. I. C. Pettersson, C. A. Weeks, K. I. Norman, T. G. Knowles & C. J. Nicol. Internal roosting location is associated with differential use of the outdoor range by free-range Laying.**

This is a UK study with typical 16,000 bird flocks and typical housing/ranging systems, so should carry some weight.

The paper states that on average, across all flocks and observations 7.34% of the whole flock (both marked and unmarked birds) were seen out on the range at a time.

Range availability is not stated, but if it is assumed to be an average 8 hours per day then the range usage is: 7.34 % x 8h/24h = **2.45%**

It should also be noted that these figures do not account for days where ranging for any reason may not be available (disease control, inclement weather etc.).

1. **A.J.A. Aarnink\*, J.M.G. Hoi and A.G.C. Beurskens. Ammonia emission and nutrient load in outdoor runs of laying hens.**

This paper provides direct measurement of ammonia emissions from ranging areas. The key figure presented is the average ammonia emission rate, this is 2.0 mg-NH3/hen/h. This equates to an emission factor of **0.017 kg-NH3/hen/y**.

### 3.5.3 Ammonia emissions from manure storage

For chicken manure storage, the Environment Agency standard emission factor is 2.38 kg-NH3/tonne/y. This figure is used for the manure storage at East House Farm.

Details of the poultry numbers and types, emission factors used and calculated ammonia emission rates used in the modelling are provided in Table 2. Note that results obtained using these figures are scaled to actual bird numbers and emission factors to provide the final results.

*Table 2. Details of poultry numbers, manure storage and baseline ammonia emission rates modelled*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Source | Number of Birds | Housing Emission Factor (kg-NH3/bird/y) | Baseline Housing Emission Rate (g-NH3/s) | Ranging Emission Factor (kg-NH3/bird/y) 1 | Baseline Ranging Emission Rate (g-NH3/s) |
| H3 | 12,000 | 0.21 | 0.079854 | 0.225 | 0.085558 3 |
| H4 | 16,000 | 0.08 | 0.040561 | 0.225 | 0.114077 3 |
| H5 | 16,000 | 0.08 | 0.040561 | 0.225 | 0.114077 3 |
| H6 | 16,000 | 0.08 | 0.040561 | 0.225 | 0.114077 3 |
| H7 | 16,000 | 0.08 | 0.040561 2 | 0.225 | 0.114077 3 |
| H8 | 16,000 | 0.08 | 0.040561 2 | 0.225 | 0.114077 2 & 3 |
| Source | Tonnage |  |  | Emission Factor (kg-NH3/t /y) | Emission Rate (g-NH3/s) |
| LITTER | 2,000 |  |  | 2.38 | 0.150835 |

1. Assumed to be for 100% ranging.

1. Results obtained using these figures are scaled by a factor of 2 (actual bird numbers would be 32,000) to provide the final results.
2. Results obtained using these figures are scaled by a factor of 0.0666 (actual overall range usage) to provide the final results.

# The Atmospheric Dispersion Modelling System (ADMS) and Model Parameters

The Atmospheric Dispersion Modelling System (ADMS) ADMS 5 is a new generation Gaussian plume air dispersion model, which means that the atmospheric boundary layer properties are characterised by two parameters; the boundary layer depth and the Monin-Obukhov length rather than in terms of the single parameter Pasquill-Gifford class.

Dispersion under convective meteorological conditions uses a skewed Gaussian concentration distribution (shown by validation studies to be a better representation than a symmetrical Gaussian expression).

ADMS has a number of model options that include: dry and wet deposition; NOx chemistry; impacts of hills; variable roughness; buildings and coastlines; puffs; fluctuations; odours; radioactivity decay (and γ-ray dose); condensed plume visibility; time varying sources and inclusion of background concentrations.

ADMS has an in-built meteorological pre-processor that allows flexible input of meteorological data both standard and more specialist. Hourly sequential and statistical data can be processed and all input and output meteorological variables are written to a file after processing.

The user defines the pollutant, the averaging time (which may be an annual average or a shorter period), which percentiles and exceedance values to calculate, whether a rolling average is required or not and the output units. The output options are designed to be flexible to cater for the variety of air quality limits which can vary from country to country and are subject to revision.

## 4.1 Meteorological data

Computer modelling of dispersion requires hourly sequential meteorological data and to provide robust statistics the record should be of a suitable length; preferably four years or longer.

The meteorological data used in this study is obtained from assimilation and short term forecast fields of the Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) system known as the Global Forecast System (GFS)1.

Prior to April 2019 the GFS was a spectral model, post April 2019 the physics are discrete. The physics/dynamics model has a resolution or had an equivalent resolution of approximately 7 km over the UK; terrain is understood to be resolved at a resolution of approximately 2 km, with sub-7 km terrain effects parameterised. Site specific data may be extrapolated from nearby archive grid points or a most representative grid point chosen. The GFS resolution adequately captures major topographical features and the broad-scale characteristics of the weather over the UK. Smaller scale topological features may be included in the dispersion modelling by using the flow field module of ADMS (FLOWSTAR2). The use of NWP data has advantages over traditional meteorological records because:

* Calm periods in traditional observational records may be over represented, this is because the instrumentation used may not record wind speeds below approximately 0.5 m/s and start up wind speeds may be greater than 1.0 m/s. In NWP data, the wind speed is continuous down to 0.0 m/s, allowing the calms module of ADMS to function correctly.
* Traditional records may include very local deviations from the broad-scale wind flow that would not necessarily be representative of the site being modelled; these deviations are difficult to identify and remove from a meteorological record. Conversely, local effects at the site being modelled are relatively easy to impose on the broad-scale flow and provided horizontal resolution is not too great, the meteorological records from NWP data may be expected to represent well the broad-scale flow.
* Information on the state of the atmosphere above ground level which would otherwise be estimated by the meteorological pre-processor may be included explicitly.

The raw GFS wind speeds are modified by the treatment of roughness lengths (see Section 4.7) and where terrain data is included in the modelling, wind speeds and directions will be further modified. The raw GFS wind rose is shown in Figure 2a and the terrain and roughness length modified wind rose for the site is shown in Figure 2b. Note that elsewhere in the modelling domain, the modified wind rose may differ more or less markedly. Please also note that FLOWSTAR2 is used to obtain a local flow field, not to explicitly model dispersion in complex terrain as defined in the ADMS User Guide; therefore, the ADMS default value for minimum turbulence length has been amended3. The resolution of the wind field in terrain runs is approximately 360 m.

1. The GFS data used is derived from the high resolution operational GFS datasets, the data is not obtained from the lower resolution (0.5 degree) long-term archive.
2. Note that FLOWSTAR requirements are for meteorological data representative of the upwind flow over the modelling domain and that single site meteorological data (observational or from high resolution modelled data) that is representative of the application site is not generally suitable (personal correspondence: CERC 2019 and UK Met O 2015). If data are deemed representative of a particular application site, either wholly or partially, then these data cannot also be representative of the upstream flow over the modelling domain. Furthermore, it would be extremely poor practice to use such data as the boundary conditions for a flow-solver, such as FLOWSTAR.
3. When modelling complex terrain with ADMS, by default, the minimum turbulence length has 0.1 m added to the flat terrain value (calculated from the Monin-Obukhov length). Whilst this might be appropriate over hill/mountain tops in terrain with slopes > 1:10 (and quite possibly only in certain wind directions) in lesser terrain it introduces model behaviour that is not desirable where FLOWSTAR is simply being used to modify the upwind flow. Specifically, the parameter sigma z of the Gaussian plume model is overly constrained, which for elevated point sources emissions, may on occasion cause over prediction of ground level concentrations in stable weather conditions and light winds (Steven R. Hanna & Biswanath Chowdhury, 2013), conversely for low level emission sources, this will cause gross under prediction. Note that this becomes particularly important overnight and if calm and light wind conditions are not being ignored, as they often are when using traditional observational meteorological datasets. To reduce this behaviour, where terrain is modelled, AS Modelling & Data Ltd. have set a minimum turbulence length of 0.025 m in ADMS. This approximates the normal behaviour of ADMS with flat terrain.

*Figure 2a. The wind rose. Raw GFS derived data for 54.695 N, 1.4 W, 2019-2022*

**

*Figure 2b. The wind rose. FLOWSTAR modified GFS derived data for NGR* *438500, 533650, 2019-2022*

## 4.2 Emission sources

Emissions from the gable end fans that are used to ventilate the existing poultry houses are represented by volume sources within ADMS (H3\_GAB to H6\_GAB). In addition, emissions from a manure storage area or building have been included within ADMS as a volume source (LITTER). Details of the volume source parameters are shown in Table 3a. The positions of the volume sources used are shown in Figure 3 (represented by red rectangles).

*Table 3a. Volume source parameters*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Source ID | Length (m) | Width (m) | Depth (m) | Base height (m) | Emission temperature (°C) | Emission rate  (g-NH3/s) |
|
| H3\_GAB | 19.8 | 10.0 | 4.0 | 0.0 | Ambient | 0.079854 |
| H4\_GAB | 16.8 | 10.0 | 4.0 | 0.0 | Ambient | 0.040561 |
| H5\_GAB & H6\_GAB | 15.2 | 10.0 | 4.0 | 0.0 | Ambient | 0.040561 |
| LITTER | 20.6 | 55.4 | 4.0 | 0.0 | Ambient | 0.150835 |

Emissions from the uncapped chimneys mounted on the high speed ridge fans that would be used to ventilate the proposed poultry houses are represented by three point sources per house within ADMS (H7 and H8; 1, 2 and 3). Details of the point source parameters are shown in Table 3b (scaling factors applied). The positions of the point sources used are shown in Figure 3 (represented by red star symbols).

*Table 3b. Point source parameters*

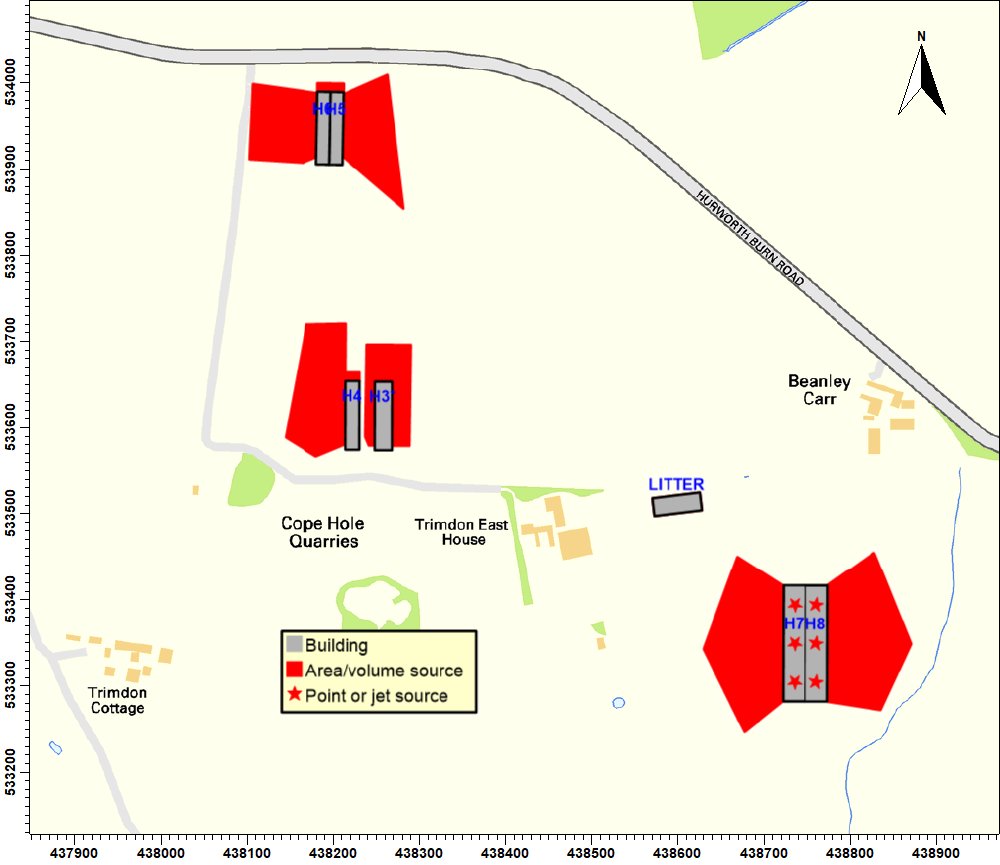
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Source ID | Height (m) | Diameter (m) | Efflux velocity (m/s) | Emission temperature (˚C) | Emission rate per source  (g-NH3/s) |
| H7 & H8; 1, 2 and 3 | 7.1 | 0.8 | 11.0 | 22.0 | 0.027041 |

The existing and proposed poultry houses have, or would have, ranging areas, which are a further source of ammonia. Emissions from the ranging areas are represented by area sources within ADMS (H3\_RAN to H8\_RAN). Note, the area sources cover the parts of the ranges that are most likely to be used frequently and not the whole of the ranging area. Details of the area source parameters are shown in Table 3c (scaling factors(s) applied). The positions of the area sources used are shown in Figure 3 (represented by red polygons).

*Table 3c. Area source parameters*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Source ID | Area (m2) | Base height (m) | Emission temperature (°C) | Emission rate  (g-NH3/s) |
| H3\_RAN | 5,944 | 0.0 | Ambient | 0.005698 |
| H4\_RAN | 8,351 | 0.0 | Ambient | 0.007598 |
| H5\_RAN | 6,671 | 0.0 | Ambient | 0.007598 |
| H6\_RAN | 6,359 | 0.0 | Ambient | 0.007598 |
| H7\_RAN | 12,593 | 0.0 | Ambient | 0.015195 |
| H8\_RAN | 12,609 | 0.0 | Ambient | 0.015195 |

*Figure 3. The positions of the modelled buildings and sources*



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## 4.3 Modelled buildings

The structure of the proposed poultry houses and other farm buildings may affect the plumes from the point sources. Therefore, the buildings are modelled within ADMS. The positions of the modelled buildings may be seen in Figure 3 (marked by grey rectangles).

## 4.4 Discrete receptors

Thirty-five discrete receptors have been defined: four at the LWSs (1 to 4); twenty-four at the SSSIs (5 to 28), five at the SSSIs/SACs (29 to 33), one at the SSS/SAC/SPA (34) and one at the SSSI/SAC/SPA/Ramsar Site. These receptors are defined at ground level within ADMS. The positions of the discrete receptors may be seen in Figure 4 (marked by enumerated pink rectangles).

## 4.5 The regular Cartesian grid

To produce the contour plots presented in Section 5 of this report, two regular Cartesian grids have been defined within ADMS; one domain of 12.5 km by 12.5 km at a 500 m resolution and one domain of 5 km by 5 km at a 100 m resolution. The grid receptors are defined at ground level within ADMS. The grids can be seen in Figure 4 (marked by grey lines). The smaller grid is also used to define the deposition velocity field.

## 4.6 Terrain data

Terrain has been considered in the modelling. The terrain data are based upon the Ordnance Survey 50 m Digital Elevation Model. A 23.0 km by 23.0 km domain has been resampled at 100 m horizontal resolution for use within ADMS. N.B. The resolution of FLOWSTAR is 64 x 64 grid points; therefore, the effective resolution of the wind field is approximately 360 m.

## 4.7 Roughness Length

In this case, a spatially varying roughness length file has been defined, this is based upon the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology 25 m land use database, with permission1. The GFS meteorological data is assumed to have a roughness length of 0.27 m (the average over the modelling domain). The sample of the central area of the spatially varying roughness length field is shown in Figure 5.

1. Morton, R.D. ; Marston, C.G.; O’Neil, A.W.; Rowland, C.S. (2021). Land Cover Map 2020 (25m rasterised land parcels, GB). NERC EDS Environmental Information Centre. <https://doi.org/10.5285/6c22cf6e-b224-414e-aa85-900325baed>

*Figure 4. The discrete receptors and regular Cartesian grids*

*Map

Description automatically generated*

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*Figure 5. The roughness length field*

*Map

Description automatically generated*

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## 4.8 Deposition

The method used to model deposition of ammonia and consequent plume depletion is based primarily upon Frederik Schrader and Christian Brümmer. Land Use Specific Ammonia Deposition Velocities: a Review of Recent Studies (2004-2013). AS Modelling & Data Ltd. has restricted deposition over arable farmland and heavily grazed and fertilised pasture; this is to compensate for possible saturation effects due to fertilizer application and to allow for periods when fields are clear of crops (Sutton), the deposition is also restricted over areas with little or no vegetation and the deposition velocity is set to 0.002 m/s where grid points are over the poultry housing and 0.010 m/s to 0.015 m/s over heavily grazed grassland. Where deposition over water surfaces is calculated, a deposition velocity of 0.005 m/s is used. Land use data used to derive deposition velocity is based upon the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology 25 m land use database, with permission1.

1. Morton, R.D. ; Marston, C.G.; O’Neil, A.W.; Rowland, C.S. (2021). Land Cover Map 2020 (25m rasterised land parcels, GB). NERC EDS Environmental Information Centre. https://doi.org/10.5285/6c22cf6e-b224-414e-aa85-900325baed.

In summary, the method is as follows:

* A preliminary run of the model without deposition is used to provide an ammonia concentration field.
* The preliminary ammonia concentration field, along with land usage is used to define a deposition velocity field. The deposition velocities used are provided in Table 4.

*Table 4. Deposition velocities*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| NH3 concentration  (PC + background) (µg/m3) | < 10 | 10 - 20 | 20 - 30 | 30 - 80 | > 80 |
| Deposition velocity - woodland  (m/s) | 0.03 | 0.015 | 0.01 | 0.005 | 0.003 |
| Deposition velocity - short vegetation  (m/s) | 0.02 (0.010 to 0.015 over heavily grazed grassland) | 0.015 | 0.01 | 0.005 | 0.003 |
| Deposition velocity - arable farmland/rye grass  (m/s) | 0.005 | 0.005 | 0.005 | 0.005 | 0.003 |

* The model is then rerun with the spatially varying deposition module.

A contour plot of the spatially varying deposition fields are provided in Figure 6.

In this case, the model has simply been run with a fixed deposition at 0.003 m/s and similarly to not modelling deposition at all, the predicted ammonia concentrations (and nitrogen and acid deposition rates) are always higher than if spatially varying deposition were modelled explicitly, particularly where there is some distance between the source and a receptor.

*Figure 6. The spatially varying deposition field*

*Map

Description automatically generated*

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# Details of the Model Runs and Results

## 5.1 Preliminary modelling and model sensitivity tests

ADMS was run a totalof sixteen times, once for each year in the meteorological record, in the following four modes:

* In basic mode without calms, or terrain - GFS data.
* With calms and without terrain - GFS data.
* Without calms and with terrain - GFS data.
* Without calms, with terrain and fixed deposition at 0.003 m/s - GFS data. A correction factor of 1.25 has been applied, which is the average ratio of the results of the calms without terrain run to the basic mode modelling run.

For each mode, statistics for the maximum annual mean ammonia concentration at each receptor were compiled.

Details of the predicted annual mean ammonia concentrations at each receptor are provided in Table 5 for the existing and proposed poultry houses and ranges. Note:

* The modelling has been conducted for the proposed new houses on the basis of 32,000 birds, whereas the proposals involve 64,000 chickens in these two houses. Therefore, the process contribution from these two houses and ranges have been multiplied by a factor of 2.
* The modelling of all of the ranges has been conducted on the basis of an emission factor of 0.225 kg-nh3/place/y, which assumes 100% of the birds are occupying the ranges 100% of the time. However, availability of the ranges is assumed to be for 8 hours a day and the Environment Agency estimate 20% of emissions will arise from the ranges. Therefore, the process contribution from the ranges has been multiplied by a factor of 0.0666 (0.2 \* 0.333).

In the Table, predicted ammonia concentrations (or concentrations equivalent to deposition rates) that are in excess of the Environment Agency’s upper percentage threshold of the precautionary Critical Level of 1.0 µg-NH3/m3 (4% for an internationally designated site, 20% for a SSSI and 100% for a non-statutory wildlife site) are coloured red. Predicted ammonia concentrations (or concentrations equivalent to deposition rates) that are in the range between the Environment Agency’s upper threshold and lower threshold (4% and 20% for an internationally designated site, 20% and 50% for a SSSI and 100%and 100% for a non-statutory wildlife site) are coloured blue. Additionally, predicted ammonia concentrations (or ammonia concentrations equivalent to nitrogen deposition rates) that exceed 1% of precautionary Critical Level of 1.0 µg-NH3/m3 at a statutory site are highlighted with bold text. For convenience, cells referring to the LWSs are shaded olive, cells referring to the SSSIs are shaded green, cells referring to the SACs are shaded purple, cells referring to the SPA are shaded orange and cells referring to the Ramsar Site are shaded blue.

*Table 5. Predicted maximum annual mean ammonia concentration at the discrete receptors*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Receptor number | X(m) | Y(m) | Designation | Maximum annual mean ammonia concentration - (µg/m3) | | | |
| GFS No calms No terrain | GFS Calms No terrain | GFS No calms Terrain | GFS Calms correction Terrain Fixed depo 0.003 m/s 1 |
| 1 | 437890 | 534948 | Local Wildlife Site | 0.315 | 0.426 | 0.310 | 0.238 |
| 2 | 440427 | 534062 | Local Wildlife Site | 0.345 | 0.391 | 0.309 | 0.146 |
| 3 | 440686 | 533339 | Local Wildlife Site | 0.246 | 0.288 | 0.213 | 0.098 |
| 4 | 436823 | 535328 | Local Wildlife Site | 0.129 | 0.178 | 0.119 | 0.050 |
| 5 | 437540 | 534514 | Charity Land LWS/SSSI | **0.408** | **0.564** | **0.392** | **0.203** |
| 6 | 436341 | 532883 | Fishburn Grassland SSSI | **0.174** | **0.230** | **0.156** | **0.067** |
| 7 | 441388 | 533416 | Pike Whin Bog SSSI | **0.166** | **0.193** | **0.147** | **0.063** |
| 8 | 436201 | 535295 | Trimdon Limestone Quarry SSSI | **0.098** | **0.132** | **0.085** | **0.034** |
| 9 | 435589 | 535204 | Raisby Hill Quarry SSSI | **0.079** | **0.106** | **0.063** | **0.025** |
| 10 | 434074 | 535752 | Raisby Hill Grassland SSSI | **0.043** | **0.056** | **0.032** | **0.012** |
| 11 | 435987 | 537009 | Town Kelloe Bank SSSI | **0.047** | **0.066** | **0.040** | **0.021** |
| 12 | 437364 | 537208 | Wingate Quarry SSSI | **0.061** | **0.079** | **0.055** | **0.032** |
| 13 | 436385 | 537743 | The Bottoms SSSI | **0.039** | **0.056** | **0.036** | **0.023** |
| 14 | 434197 | 537529 | Quarrington Hill Grasslands SSSI | **0.030** | **0.040** | **0.025** | 0.009 |
| 15 | 433325 | 537376 | Quarrington Hill Grasslands SSSI | **0.026** | **0.035** | **0.020** | 0.007 |
| 16 | 434411 | 538340 | Cassop Vale SSSI | **0.026** | **0.036** | **0.021** | 0.008 |
| 17 | 435406 | 541491 | Crime Rigg Quarry SSSI | **0.015** | **0.022** | **0.013** | 0.006 |
| 18 | 433417 | 541675 | Sherburn Hill SSSI | **0.013** | **0.018** | **0.011** | 0.004 |
| 19 | 438985 | 542592 | Tuthill Quarry SSSI | **0.025** | **0.029** | **0.021** | 0.009 |
| 20 | 436492 | 543327 | Dabble Bank SSSI | **0.015** | **0.018** | **0.012** | 0.005 |
| 21 | 443514 | 541705 | Yoden Village Quarry SSSI | **0.037** | **0.041** | **0.030** | **0.013** |
| 22 | 444936 | 540313 | Durham Coast SSSI | **0.043** | **0.047** | **0.035** | **0.015** |
| 23 | 443865 | 537391 | Hulam Fen SSSI | **0.065** | **0.072** | **0.058** | **0.025** |
| 24 | 445212 | 535418 | Hart Bog SSSI | **0.048** | **0.054** | **0.040** | **0.016** |
| 25 | 431903 | 526958 | Railway Stell West SSSI | **0.011** | **0.017** | **0.012** | 0.004 |
| 26 | 433325 | 532450 | Bishop Middleham Quarry SSSI | **0.048** | **0.061** | **0.043** | **0.015** |
| 27 | 430250 | 532710 | The Carrs SSSI | **0.024** | **0.030** | **0.020** | 0.007 |
| 28 | 448562 | 536412 | Durham Coast SSSI | **0.026** | **0.029** | **0.024** | 0.009 |
| 29 | 440980 | 538685 | Castle Eden Dene SSSI/SAC | **0.083** | **0.088** | **0.068** | **0.033** |
| 30 | 442738 | 538495 | Castle Eden Dene SSSI/SAC | **0.072** | **0.079** | **0.058** | **0.026** |
| 31 | 445215 | 540400 | Durham Coast SSSI/SAC | **0.041** | **0.045** | **0.034** | **0.015** |
| 32 | 447417 | 538198 | Durham Coast SSSI/SAC | **0.029** | **0.033** | **0.027** | **0.011** |
| 33 | 431918 | 532841 | Thrislington Plantation SSSI/SAC | **0.034** | **0.043** | **0.027** | 0.009 |
| 34 | 446039 | 540378 | Durham Coast SSSI/SAC & Northumbria Coast SPA | **0.038** | **0.041** | **0.033** | **0.014** |
| 35 | 447293 | 538695 | Durham Coast SSSI/SAC & Northumbria Coast SPA/Ramsar | **0.030** | **0.033** | **0.028** | **0.012** |

## 5.2 Detailed deposition modelling

In this case, detailed modelling has been carried out over a high resolution (100 m) domain that extends 5.0 km by 5.0 km. The primary purpose is to determine the magnitude of deposition of ammonia and consequent plume depletion close to the sources where it is of the greatest importance. Outside of this 5.0 km by 5.0 km domain a fixed deposition velocity of 0.005 m/s is assumed (with appropriate deposition velocities applied post-modelling at the discrete receptors).

Terrain effects may be significant at some receptors; therefore, the detailed deposition run was made with terrain. Calms cannot be used with terrain or spatially varying deposition; therefore, a calms correction, a factor of 1.25, which is based upon the results of the preliminary modelling, has been applied to the results.

The results of the detailed deposition modelling are shown in Table 6. In the Table, predicted ammonia concentrations and nitrogen deposition rates that are in excess of the Environment Agency’s upper percentage threshold (20% for an internationally designated site and 50% for a SSSI) of the relevant Critical Level or Critical Load for the site are coloured red. Concentrations and deposition rates in the range between the Environment Agency’s lower and upper threshold percentage of the relevant Critical Level or Critical Load (4% and 20% for an internationally designated site and 20% and 50% for a SSSI) are coloured blue. Additionally, predicted ammonia concentrations and nitrogen deposition rates that are in excess of 1% of the Critical Level or Critical Load are highlighted in bold text.

Contour plots of the predicted ground level maximum annual mean ammonia concentration and the maximum nitrogen deposition rates for the existing and proposed poultry houses are shown in Figures 7a and 7b. Please note that outside of the 5.0 km by 5.0 km, deposition contours should be interpreted with caution because, whilst appropriate deposition velocities applied at the discrete receptors, elsewhere a fixed deposition velocity is applied.

*Table 6. Maximum annual mean ammonia concentration and nitrogen deposition rates at the discrete receptors*

| Receptor number | X(m) | Y(m) | Designation | Site Parameters | | | Maximum annual ammonia concentration | | Maximum annual nitrogen deposition rate | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Deposition Velocity | Critical Level (µg/m3) | Critical Load (kg/ha) | Process Contribution (µg/m3) | %age of Critical Level | Process Contribution (kg/ha) | %age of Critical Load |
| 1 | 437890 | 534948 | Local Wildlife Site | 0.03 | 1.0 | 10.0 | 0.186 | **18.64** | 1.453 | **14.53** |
| 2 | 440427 | 534062 | Local Wildlife Site | 0.02 | 1.0 | 10.0 | 0.150 | **14.95** | 0.777 | **7.77** |
| 3 | 440686 | 533339 | Local Wildlife Site | 0.02 | 1.0 | 10.0 | 0.104 | **10.41** | 0.541 | **5.41** |
| 4 | 436823 | 535328 | Local Wildlife Site | 0.03 | 1.0 | 10.0 | 0.043 | **4.32** | 0.337 | **3.37** |
| 5 | 437540 | 534514 | Charity Land LWS/SSSI | 0.03 | 3.0 | 20.0 | 0.188 | **6.26** | 1.464 | **7.32** |
| 6 | 436341 | 532883 | Fishburn Grassland SSSI | 0.02 | 3.0 | 15.0 | 0.064 | **2.13** | 0.332 | **2.21** |
| 7 | 441388 | 533416 | Pike Whin Bog SSSI | 0.02 | 1.0 | 10.0 | 0.069 | **6.88** | 0.358 | **3.58** |
| 8 | 436201 | 535295 | Trimdon Limestone Quarry SSSI | 0.03 | 3.0 | 15.0 | 0.030 | 0.99 | 0.231 | **1.54** |
| 9 | 435589 | 535204 | Raisby Hill Quarry SSSI | 0.03 | n/a | n/a | 0.024 | **-** | 0.184 | **-** |
| 10 | 434074 | 535752 | Raisby Hill Grassland SSSI | 0.02 | 3.0 | 15.0 | 0.012 | 0.40 | 0.062 | 0.41 |
| 11 | 435987 | 537009 | Town Kelloe Bank SSSI | 0.02 | 3.0 | 15.0 | 0.017 | 0.58 | 0.091 | 0.60 |
| 12 | 437364 | 537208 | Wingate Quarry SSSI | 0.03 | 1.0 | 15.0 | 0.029 | **2.91** | 0.227 | **1.51** |
| 13 | 436385 | 537743 | The Bottoms SSSI | 0.02 | 3.0 | 15.0 | 0.017 | 0.56 | 0.088 | 0.59 |
| 14 | 434197 | 537529 | Quarrington Hill Grasslands SSSI | 0.02 | 3.0 | 15.0 | 0.008 | 0.28 | 0.044 | 0.29 |
| 15 | 433325 | 537376 | Quarrington Hill Grasslands SSSI | 0.02 | 3.0 | 15.0 | 0.007 | 0.24 | 0.038 | 0.25 |
| 16 | 434411 | 538340 | Cassop Vale SSSI | 0.03 | 1.0 | 15.0 | 0.008 | 0.76 | 0.059 | 0.40 |
| 17 | 435406 | 541491 | Crime Rigg Quarry SSSI | 0.03 | n/a | n/a | 0.006 | **-** | 0.048 | **-** |
| 18 | 433417 | 541675 | Sherburn Hill SSSI | 0.03 | 3.0 | 15.0 | 0.004 | 0.14 | 0.032 | 0.21 |
| 19 | 438985 | 542592 | Tuthill Quarry SSSI | 0.03 | 3.0 | 15.0 | 0.010 | 0.33 | 0.078 | 0.52 |
| 20 | 436492 | 543327 | Dabble Bank SSSI | 0.03 | 1.0 | 15.0 | 0.005 | 0.53 | 0.041 | 0.28 |
| 21 | 443514 | 541705 | Yoden Village Quarry SSSI | 0.03 | n/a | n/a | 0.014 | **-** | 0.106 | **-** |
| 22 | 444936 | 540313 | Durham Coast SSSI | 0.02 | 1.0 | 10.0 | 0.015 | **1.48** | 0.077 | 0.77 |
| 23 | 443865 | 537391 | Hulam Fen SSSI | 0.02 | 1.0 | 15.0 | 0.025 | **2.51** | 0.130 | 0.87 |
| 24 | 445212 | 535418 | Hart Bog SSSI | 0.02 | 1.0 | 10.0 | 0.016 | **1.58** | 0.082 | 0.82 |
| 25 | 431903 | 526958 | Railway Stell West SSSI | 0.02 | 1.0 | 15.0 | 0.004 | 0.44 | 0.023 | 0.15 |
| 26 | 433325 | 532450 | Bishop Middleham Quarry SSSI | 0.03 | 3.0 | 15.0 | 0.015 | 0.50 | 0.118 | 0.79 |
| 27 | 430250 | 532710 | The Carrs SSSI | 0.03 | 1.0 | 15.0 | 0.006 | 0.65 | 0.050 | 0.34 |
| 28 | 448562 | 536412 | Durham Coast SSSI | 0.02 | 1.0 | 10.0 | 0.009 | 0.87 | 0.045 | 0.45 |
| 29 | 440980 | 538685 | Castle Eden Dene SSSI/SAC | 0.03 | 1.0 | 5.0 | 0.034 | **3.42** | 0.266 | **5.32** |
| 30 | 442738 | 538495 | Castle Eden Dene SSSI/SAC | 0.03 | 1.0 | 5.0 | 0.025 | **2.51** | 0.196 | **3.92** |
| 31 | 445215 | 540400 | Durham Coast SSSI/SAC | 0.02 | 1.0 | 8.0 | 0.014 | **1.43** | 0.074 | 0.93 |
| 32 | 447417 | 538198 | Durham Coast SSSI/SAC | 0.02 | 1.0 | 8.0 | 0.011 | **1.12** | 0.058 | 0.73 |
| 33 | 431918 | 532841 | Thrislington Plantation SSSI/SAC | 0.03 | 1.0 | 15.0 | 0.009 | 0.89 | 0.070 | 0.46 |
| 34 | 446039 | 540378 | Durham Coast SSSI/SAC & Northumbria Coast SPA | 0.02 | 1.0 | 8.0 | 0.014 | **1.37** | 0.071 | 0.89 |
| 35 | 447293 | 538695 | Durham Coast SSSI/SAC & Northumbria Coast SPA/Ramsar | 0.02 | 1.0 | 8.0 | 0.012 | **1.17** | 0.061 | 0.76 |

*Figure 7a. Predicted maximum annual mean ammonia concentrations*

Chart

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*Figure 7b. Maximum annual nitrogen deposition rates*

*Map

Description automatically generated*

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# Summary and Conclusions

AS Modelling & Data Ltd. has been instructed by Mr. Steve Raasch, on behalf of E. M. and S. E. Carter, to use computer modelling to assess the impact of ammonia emissions from the existing and proposed free range egg-laying chicken houses at East House Farm, Trimdon Village in County Durham. TS29 6NH.

Ammonia emission rates from the existing and proposed poultry houses have been assessed and quantified based upon the Environment Agency’s standard ammonia emission factors. The ammonia emission rates have then been used as inputs to an atmospheric dispersion and deposition model which calculates ammonia exposure levels and nitrogen and acid deposition rates in the surrounding area.

The modelling predicts that:

* The process contribution of the existing and proposed poultry houses at East House Farm to annual mean ammonia concentrations and nitrogen deposition rates would not exceed the Environment Agency’s upper threshold percentage of the relevant Critical Level or Critical Load at any of the wildlife sites included in this study.
* The process contribution of the existing and proposed poultry houses to annual mean nitrogen deposition rates would exceed the Environment Agency’s lower threshold percentage of the strict Critical Load of 5.0 kg/ha/y at closer parts of Castle Eden Dene SSSI/SAC. It should be noted, however, that it is unlikely that the lower bound of the range of Critical Loads is applicable at this site (the Critical Load of 5.0 kg/ha/y is for broad habitat of coniferous woodlands with lichens & free-living algae, these features which are not mentioned in the SSSI/SAC citation and it has been previously accepted/confirmed by Natural England that this is the case.
* There are exceedances of 1% of the Critical Level or Critical Load at a number of other wildlife sites, which are designated as LWSs, SSSIs, SACs and Ramsar sites.

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