

# **A Report on the Modelling of the Dispersion and Deposition of Ammonia from the Existing and Proposed Free Range Egg Laying Chicken Houses at Cil Mawr, near Meifod in Powys**

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## 1. Introduction

AS Modelling & Data Ltd. has been instructed by Rosina Bloor of Roger Parry & Partners LLP, on behalf of the applicant Mr. D. Hughes, to use computer modelling to assess the impact of ammonia emissions from the existing and proposed free range egg laying chicken houses at Cil Mawr, Meifod, Powys. SY22 6XZ.

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.

## 2. Background Details

The site of the existing and proposed free range chicken houses at Cil Mawr is in a rural area, approximately 2.7 km to the east-north-east of the village of Meifod in Powys. The surrounding land is used predominately for livestock farming, although there are some arable fields and wooded areas. The site is at an altitude of around 90 m in the River Vyrnwy Valley.

The existing poultry house provides accommodation for up to 8,000 egg laying chickens, which have daytime access to ranging areas outside the house. The house is naturally ventilated; manure collects within the house throughout the lifetime of the flocks and is removed at the end of each flock cycle, which is approximately once per year.

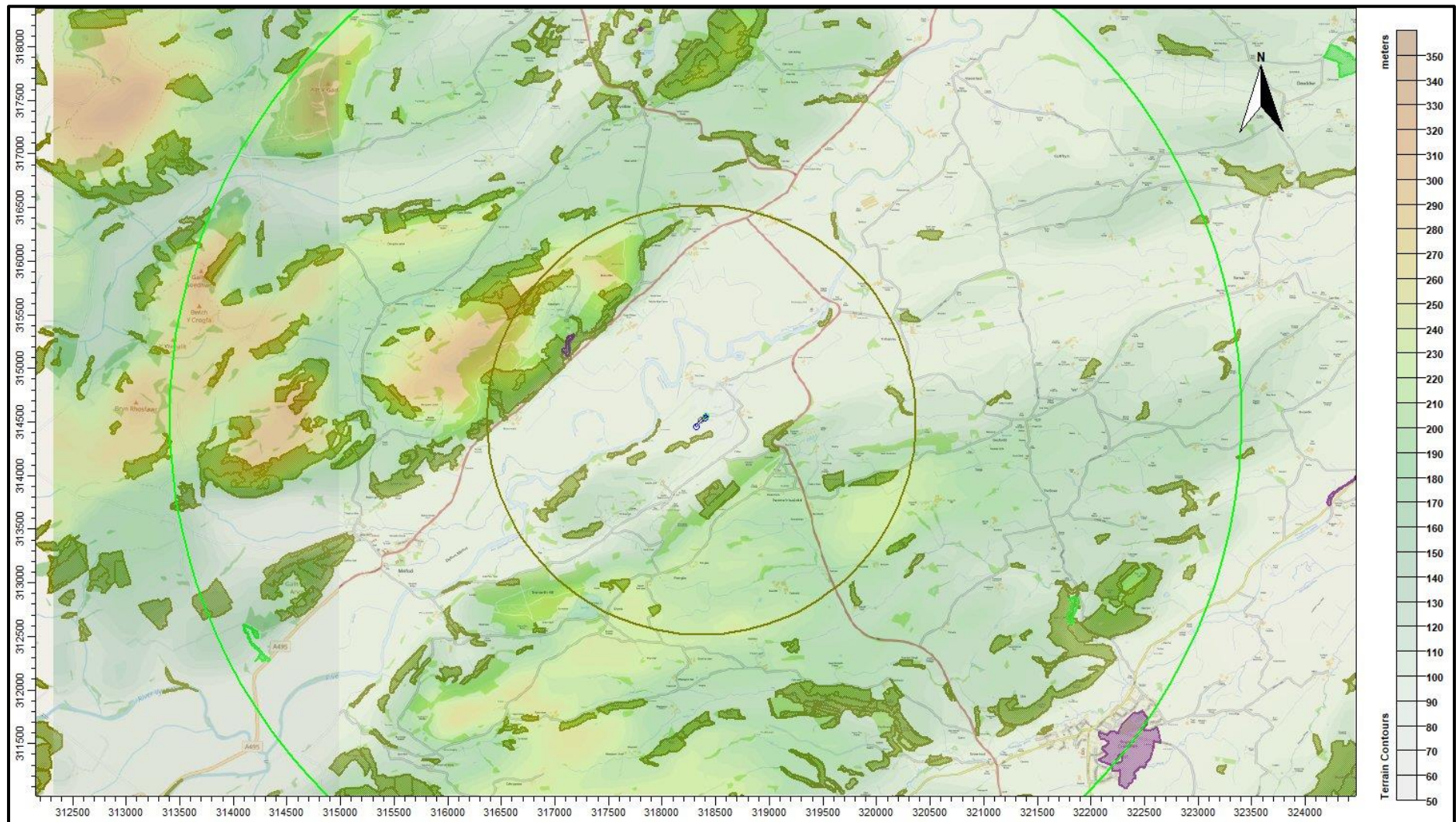
Under the proposal, the existing poultry house would be demolished and replaced by a new poultry house. The proposed poultry house would provide accommodation for up to 32,000 free range egg laying chickens. The poultry house would have pop holes which would provide the birds with daytime access to an outside ranging area and would be ventilated by uncapped high speed ridge/roof mounted fans, each with a short chimney. Every four days, the birds' droppings would be removed by a belt collection system and stored temporarily on the farm, prior to being removed from site or spreading to land.

There are several areas of Ancient Woodlands (AWs) within 2 km of the site of the proposed poultry house at Cil Mawr. There are five Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within 5 km of the site, three of which are also designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). Further details of the SSSIs are provided below:

- Allt y Main Mine SSSI – approximately 1.3 km to the north-west (also designated as a unit of the Tanat & Vyrnwy Bat Sites SAC).
- Bryngwyn Hall and Coach House SSSI – approximately 3.6 km to the north (also designated as a unit of the Tanat & Vyrnwy Bat Sites SAC).
- Gwern-y-Brain Dingle SSSI – approximately 3.7 km to the south-east.
- Glascoed, Meifod SSSI – approximately 4.5 km to the south-west.
- Granllyn SSSI – approximately 4.7 km to the south-east (also designated as a SAC).

A map of the surrounding area showing the positions of the proposed poultry house and the nearby wildlife sites is provided in Figure 1. In this figure, the AWs are shaded in olive, the SSSIs are shaded green, the SACs are shaded purple and the site of the proposed poultry house is outlined in blue.

Figure 1. The area surrounding the site – concentric circles radii at 2 km (olive) and 5 km (green)



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### **3. 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 ( $\mu\text{g-NH}_3/\text{m}^3$ ) 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 ( $\text{kg-N/ha/y}$ ). Acid deposition is expressed in terms of kilograms equivalent (of  $\text{H}^+$  ions) per hectare per year ( $\text{keq/ha/y}$ ).

#### **3.2 Background ammonia levels and nitrogen and acid deposition**

The background ammonia concentration (annual mean) in the area around the site of the proposed poultry unit and the wildlife sites is  $1.79 \mu\text{g-NH}_3/\text{m}^3$ . The background nitrogen deposition rate to woodland is  $28.14 \text{ kg-N/ha/y}$  and to short vegetation is  $17.64 \text{ kg-N/ha/y}$ . The background acid deposition rate to woodland is  $2.12 \text{ keq/ha/y}$  and to short vegetation is  $1.37 \text{ keq/ha/y}$ . The source of these background figures is the Air Pollution Information System (APIS, June 2018).

#### **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  $3.0 \mu\text{g-NH}_3/\text{m}^3$  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  $1.0 \mu\text{g-NH}_3/\text{m}^3$  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  $\mu\text{g-NH}_3/\text{m}^3$  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 the Critical Load for acid deposition.

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

Site	Critical Level ( $\mu\text{g-NH}_3/\text{m}^3$ )	Critical Load Nitrogen (kg-N/ha/y)	Critical Load Acid (keq/ha/y)
AWs	1.0 <sup>1</sup>	-	-
Allat y Main Mine SSSI/SAC	n/a <sup>2</sup>	n/a <sup>2</sup>	n/a <sup>2</sup>
Glascoed, Meifod SSSI	3.0 <sup>3</sup>	10.0 <sup>3</sup>	-
Gwen-y-Brain Dingle SSSI	n/a <sup>4</sup>	n/a <sup>4</sup>	n/a <sup>4</sup>
Bryngwyn Hall Stables & Coach House SSSI/SAC	3.0 <sup>3</sup>	10.0 <sup>3</sup>	-
Granllyn SSSI/SAC	3.0 <sup>5</sup>	n/a <sup>5</sup>	n/a <sup>5</sup>

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. The site is designated as a winter roosting site for Greater Horseshoe Bats.
3. The site is designated as a breeding site for Greater Horseshoe Bats.
4. The site is designated for geological features.
5. Based on the citation for the site and information obtained from the APIS website (June 2018).

### 3.4 Guidance on the significance of ammonia emissions

In March 2017, Natural Resources Wales (Regulation and Permitting Department, EPP) published Operational Guidance Note 41 (OGN 41), "Assessment of ammonia and nitrogen impacts from livestock units when applying for an Environmental Permit or Planning Permission". This guidance was intended to update the way Natural Resources Wales (NRW) assessed emissions, in particular by changing the thresholds of insignificance and the upper threshold process contributions for designated sites. These designated sites include European sites, such as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites as well as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

Table 1 in OGN 41 describes the revised screening distance and thresholds for livestock developments; the threshold of insignificant percentage of the designated site Critical Level or Load is given as 1%; the upper threshold percentage of the designated site Critical Level or Load is given as 8%.

Table 2 in OGN 41 describes the possible outcomes of assessment and for detailed modelling of the application alone, where process contributions, considered in isolation, are up to 1% of the designated

site Critical Level or Load, then it should be determined that there is no significant environmental effect/no likely significant effect/damage to scientific interest.

Where process contributions, considered in isolation, are between 1% and 8% of the designated site Critical Level or Load, an in-combination assessment is required. Should the in-combination process contributions be between 1% and 8% of the designated site Critical Level or Load then it should be determined that the application would cause no significant environmental effect/likely significant effect/damage to scientific interest.

When considering process contributions, in isolation or in-combination, if they exceed 8% of the designated site Critical Level or Load it is necessary to consider background concentrations and whether the designated site Critical Level or Load is breached and whether additional controls may be necessary. The application will then be determined based on whether there will be significant environmental effect/adverse effect/damage to scientific interest.

For Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) and Ancient Woodlands (AWs), the current assessment procedure usually applied is based on the Environment Agency's horizontal guidance, H1 Environmental Risks Assessment, H1 Annex B - Intensive Farming. The following are taken from this document. "An emission is insignificant where Process Contribution (PC) is <50% for local and national nature reserves (LNRs & NNRs), ancient woodland and local wildlife sites." And "Where modelling predicts a process contribution >100% at a NNR, LNR, ancient woodland or local wildlife site, your proposal may not be considered acceptable. In such cases, your assessment should include proposals to reduce ammonia emissions."

This document was withdrawn February 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 and replaced with a web-page titled "Intensive farming risk assessment for your environmental permit", which contains essentially the same criteria. It is assumed that the upper threshold and lower threshold on the web-page refers to the levels that were previously referred to as levels of insignificance and acceptability in Annex B– Intensive Farming.

Within the range between the lower and upper thresholds, whether or not the impact is deemed acceptable is at the discretion of the Environment Agency. N.B. 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%).

### **3.5 IAQM Position Statement on the use of the 1% criterion**

A Position Statement issued by the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) in January 2016 further clarifies the use of the 1% criterion for the determination of an 'insignificant' effect of air quality impacts on sensitive habitats. The Position Statement states: *"the use of a criterion of 1% of an environmental standard or assessment level in the context of habitats should be used only to screen out impacts that will have an insignificant effect. It should not be used as a threshold above which damage is implied."* Furthermore, if the impacts are plainly above 1% then this should be regarded as potentially significant; where impacts are just slightly greater than 1% then a degree of professional judgement should be applied with regards to the theoretical risk.

### 3.6 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.

#### 3.6.1 Proposed chicken housing ammonia emissions

The Environment Agency provides an Intensive Farming guidance note which lists standard ammonia emission factors for a variety of livestock, including poultry. For free-range egg laying chickens on a flat-deck system where manure collects within the housing, such as the existing house, the Environment Agency figure is 0.29 kg-NH<sub>3</sub>/bird place/year. For free-range egg laying chickens, in an aviary system where manure is removed frequently using a belt system, such as the proposed house, the Environment Agency figure is 0.08 kg-NH<sub>3</sub>/bird place/year.

#### 3.6.2 Proposed ranging area ammonia emissions

As the birds have/would have access to outdoor ranging areas, some of the birds' droppings, which is the source of the ammonia, is/would be deposited on these ranging areas. For modelling purposes, it is assumed that 12%<sup>1</sup> of the droppings are deposited on the ranging areas; this assumption is based upon figures from "Ammonia emission factors for UK agriculture" (Misselbrook *et al*). To estimate the ammonia emissions from the ranges, it has been assumed that laying hens produce 0.8 kg-N/y (Misselbrook) in their droppings and that 35% of ammoniacal nitrogen is emitted as ammonia (Misselbrook and Defra). This equates to an emission factor of 0.34 kg-NH<sub>3</sub>/bird/y.

Details of the poultry numbers and types, the emission factors used and the calculated ammonia emission rates are provided in Table 2.

1. A figure of 20% is sometimes assumed. However, it should be noted that this figure is probably based primarily upon the widely accepted figure of 80% of dropping occurring at night when birds are housed and a single report; however, because, even under optimal conditions, not all of the birds go outside (50% is considered a high percentage), this does not imply that 20% of droppings occur outside the house.

*Table 2. Details of poultry numbers and ammonia emission rates*

Source	Animal numbers	Type or weight	Emission factor (kg-NH <sub>3</sub> /place/y)	Emission rate (g-NH <sub>3</sub> /s)
Existing Housing	8,000 (x 0.88)	Egg laying chickens, deep pit/litter system	0.29 (EA figure)	0.064694
Existing Ranges	8,000 (x 0.12)	Ranging areas	0.34 (AS Modelling & Data figure)	0.010343
Proposed Housing	32,000 (x 0.88)	Egg laying chickens, aviary system	0.08 (EA figure)	0.071387
Proposed Range	32,000 (x 0.12)	Ranging areas	0.34 (AS Modelling & Data figure)	0.041372



## 4. 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 including: dry and wet deposition; NO<sub>x</sub> chemistry; impacts of hills; variable roughness; buildings and coastlines; puffs; fluctuations; odours; radioactivity decay (and  $\gamma$ -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).

The GFS is a spectral model and data are archived at a horizontal resolution of 0.25 degrees, which is approximately 25 km over the UK (formerly 0.5 degrees, or approximately 50 km). 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 (FLOWSTAR). 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 wind rose for the raw GFS data is shown in Figure 2a.

Wind speeds are modified by the treatment of roughness lengths (see Section 4.7) and where terrain data is included in the modelling, the raw GFS wind speeds and directions will be modified. The terrain and roughness length modified wind rose for the location at the proposed poultry house at Cil Mawr is shown in Figure 2b. It should be noted that, in this case, the wind flow is heavily influenced by the River Vyrnwy Valley; however, elsewhere in the modelling domain, the modified wind roses may differ markedly, reflecting the local flow in that part of the domain. The resolution of the wind field in terrain runs is approximately 150 m. Please also note that FLOWSTAR 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 amended.

Figure 2a. The wind rose. Raw GFS derived data, for 52.722 N, 3.028 W, 2014-2017

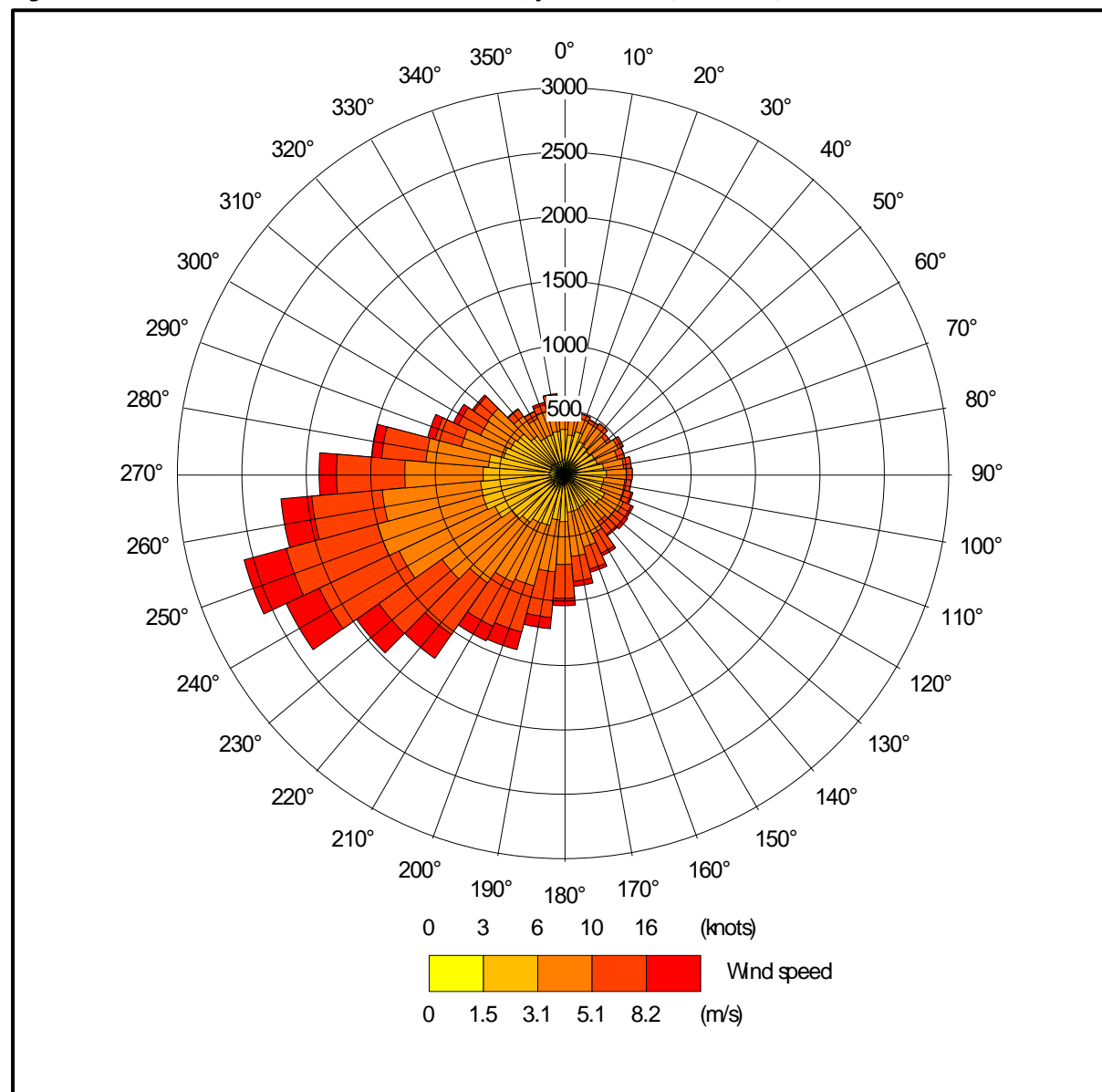
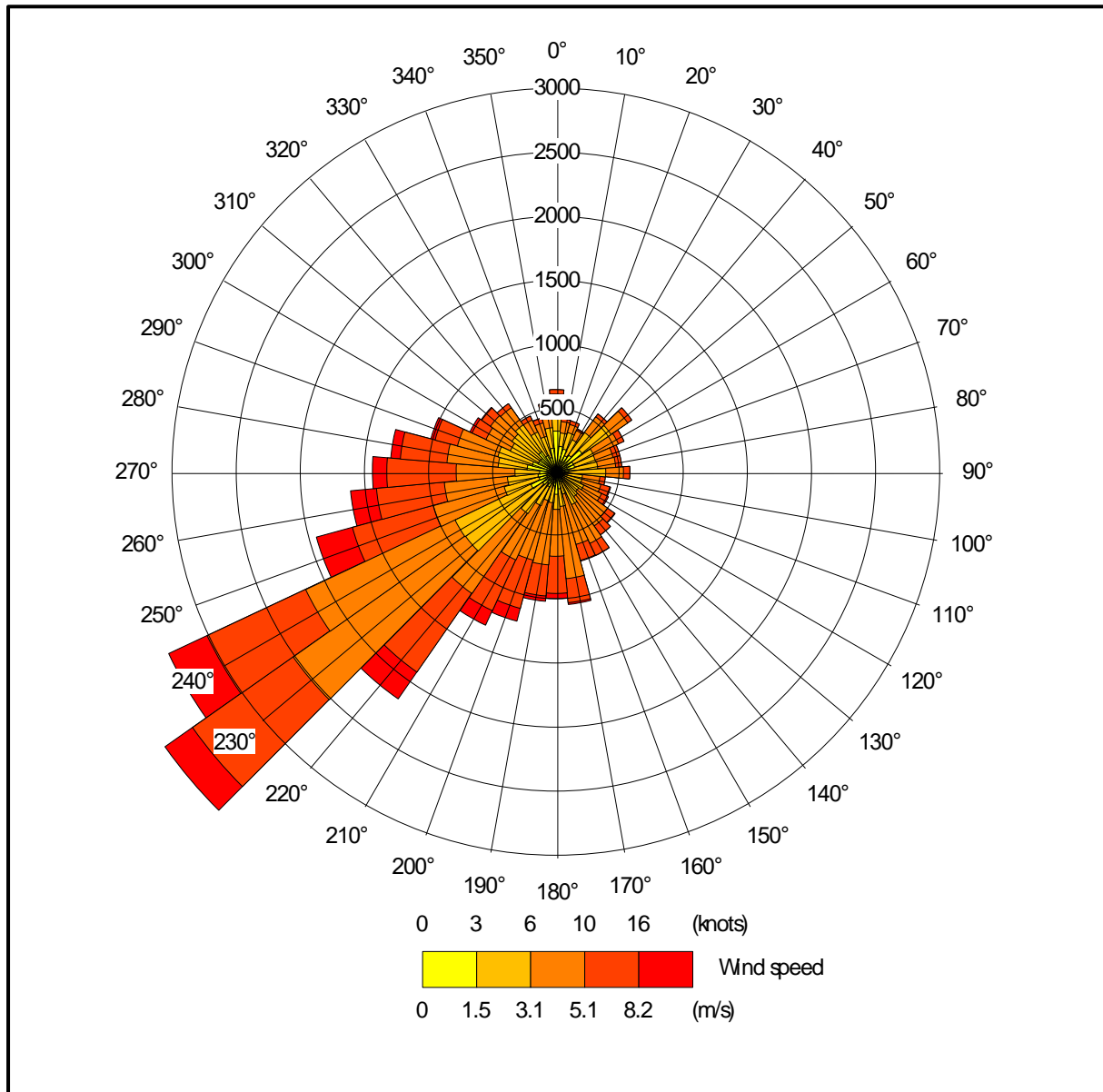


Figure 2b. The wind rose. FLOWSTAR modified GFS derived data for NGR 318400, 314550



## 4.2 Emission sources

Emissions from the high speed ridge/roof fans that would be used to ventilate the proposed poultry house are represented by three point sources within ADMS (PR a, b & c). Details of the point source parameters are shown in Table 3a.

Emissions from the naturally ventilated existing house are represented by a volume source within ADMS (EX).

The existing and proposed ranging areas are represented by area sources within ADMS (EX\_RAN\_S, EX\_RAN\_N & PR\_RAN). Note that the area source covers the parts of the range most likely to be used frequently and not the whole ranging area.

Details of the source parameters are provided in Tables 3a, 3b and 3c. The positions of the sources are shown in Figure 3a (existing scenario) and 3b (proposed scenario).

*Table 3a. Point source parameters*

Source ID	Height (m)	Diameter (m)	Efflux velocity (m/s)	Emission temperature (°C)	Emission rate per source (g-NH <sub>3</sub> /s)
PR a, b & c	6.5	0.8	11.0	21.0	0.023769

*Table 3b. Volume source parameters*

Source ID	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Base height (m)	Emission temperature (°C)	Emission rate per source (g-NH <sub>3</sub> /s)
EX	30.19	16.68	3.0	0.5	Ambient	0.064694

*Table 3c. Area source parameters*

Source ID	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Base height (m)	Emission temperature (°C)	Emission rate (g-NH <sub>3</sub> /s)
PR_RAN	4,189.1	0.0	Ambient	0.041372
EX_RAN_S	1,741.9	0.0	Ambient	0.005171
EX_RAN_N	1,233.2	0.0	Ambient	0.005171

## 4.3 Modelled buildings

The structure of the proposed poultry house may affect the plumes from the point sources. Therefore, the building is modelled within ADMS. The position of the modelled building may be seen in Figure 3b, where it is marked by a grey rectangle.

## 4.4 Discrete receptors

Forty-four discrete receptors have been defined: thirty-eight at the AWs (1 to 38); two at the SSSIs (39 and 40) and four at the SSSI/SACs (42 to 44). These receptors are defined at ground level within ADMS. The positions of the discrete receptors may be seen in Figures 4a and 4b, where they are marked by enumerated pink rectangles.



#### **4.5 Cartesian grid**

To produce the contour plots presented in Section 5 of this report and to define the spatially varying deposition field used in the detailed modelling, a regular Cartesian grid has been defined at ground level within ADMS. The position of the Cartesian grid may be seen in Figure 4b, where it is marked by grey lines.

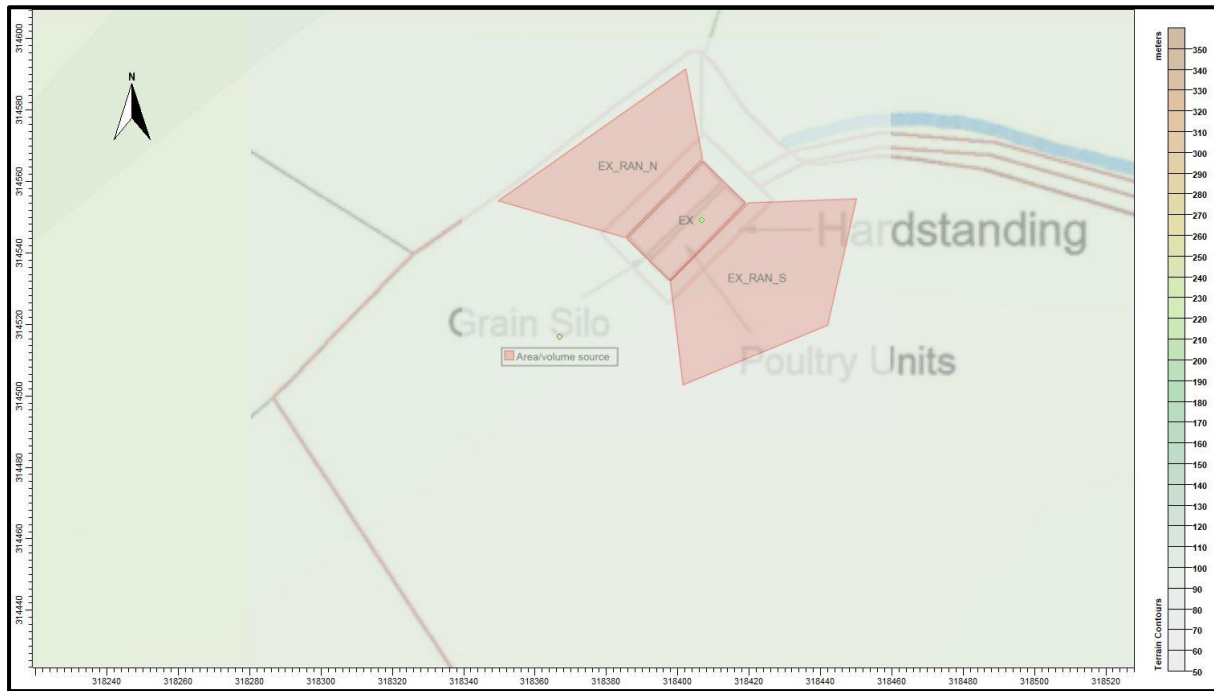
#### **4.6 Terrain data**

Terrain has been considered in the modelling. The terrain data are based upon the Ordnance Survey 50 m Digital Elevation Model. A 10.0 km x 10.0 km domain has been resampled at 100 m horizontal resolution for use within. N.B. The resolution of FLOWSTAR is 64 x 64 grid points; therefore, the effective resolution of the wind field is approximately 150 m.

#### **4.7 Roughness Length**

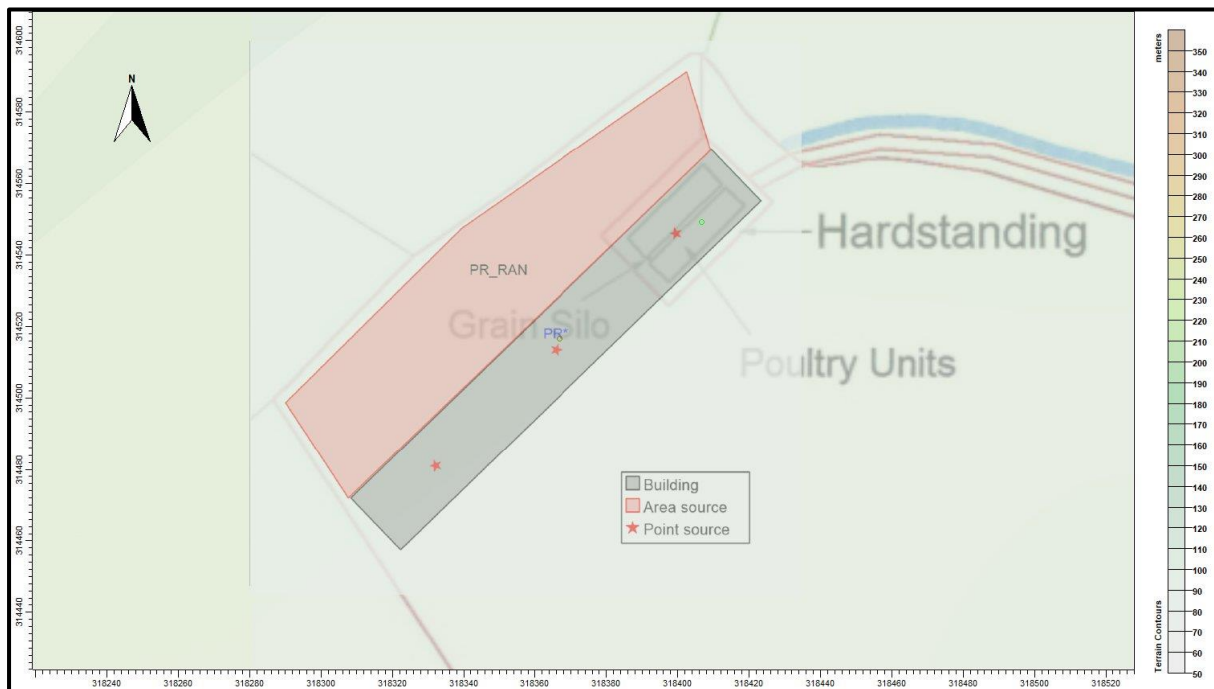
A fixed surface roughness length of 0.3 m has been applied over the entire modelling domain. As a precautionary measure, the GFS meteorological data is assumed to have a roughness length of 0.25 m. The effect of the difference in roughness length is precautionary as it increases the frequency of low wind speeds and stability and therefore increases predicted ground level concentrations.

Figure 3a. The positions of the modelled buildings and sources – Existing scenario



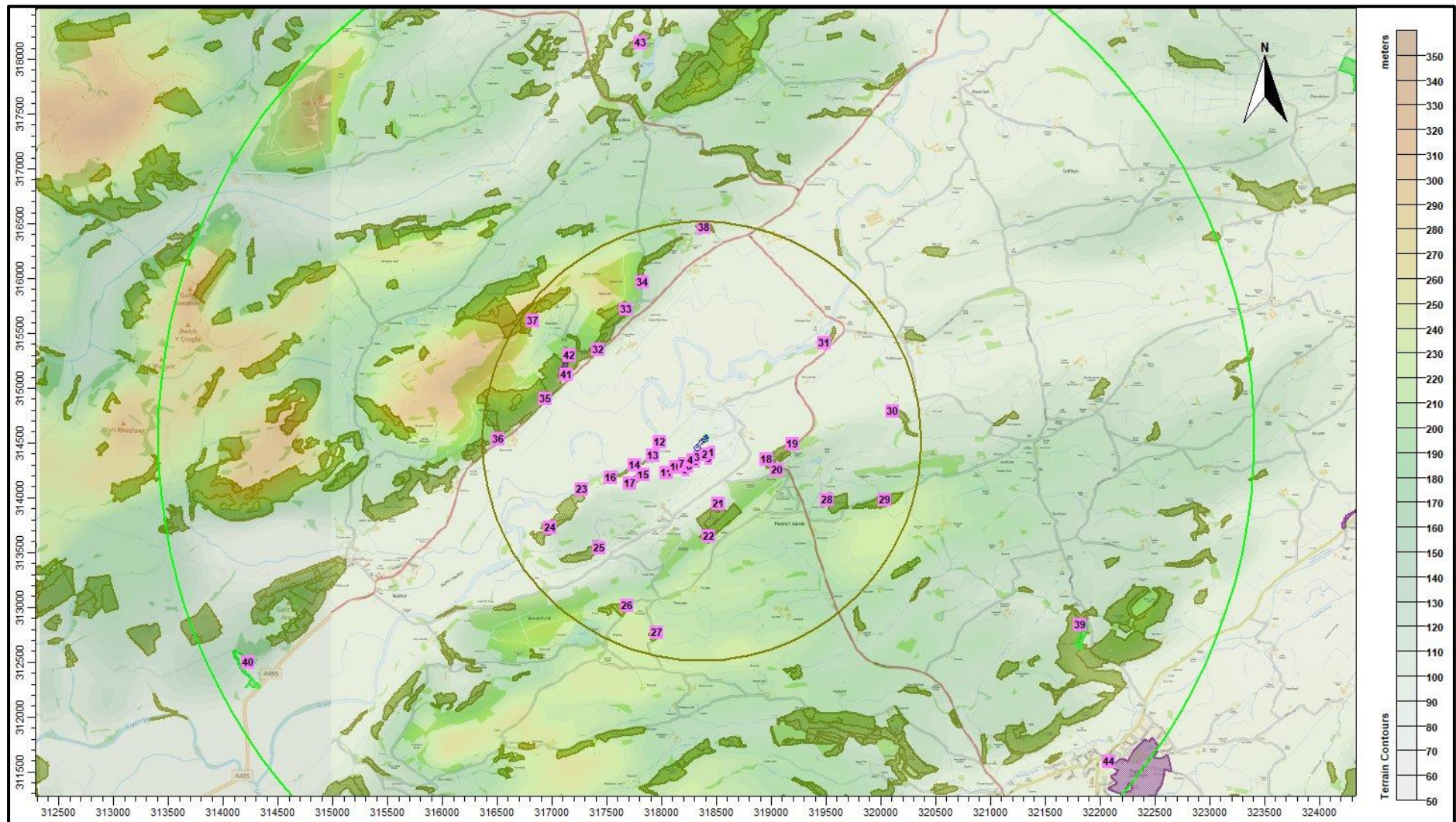
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Figure 3b. The positions of the modelled buildings and sources – Proposed scenario



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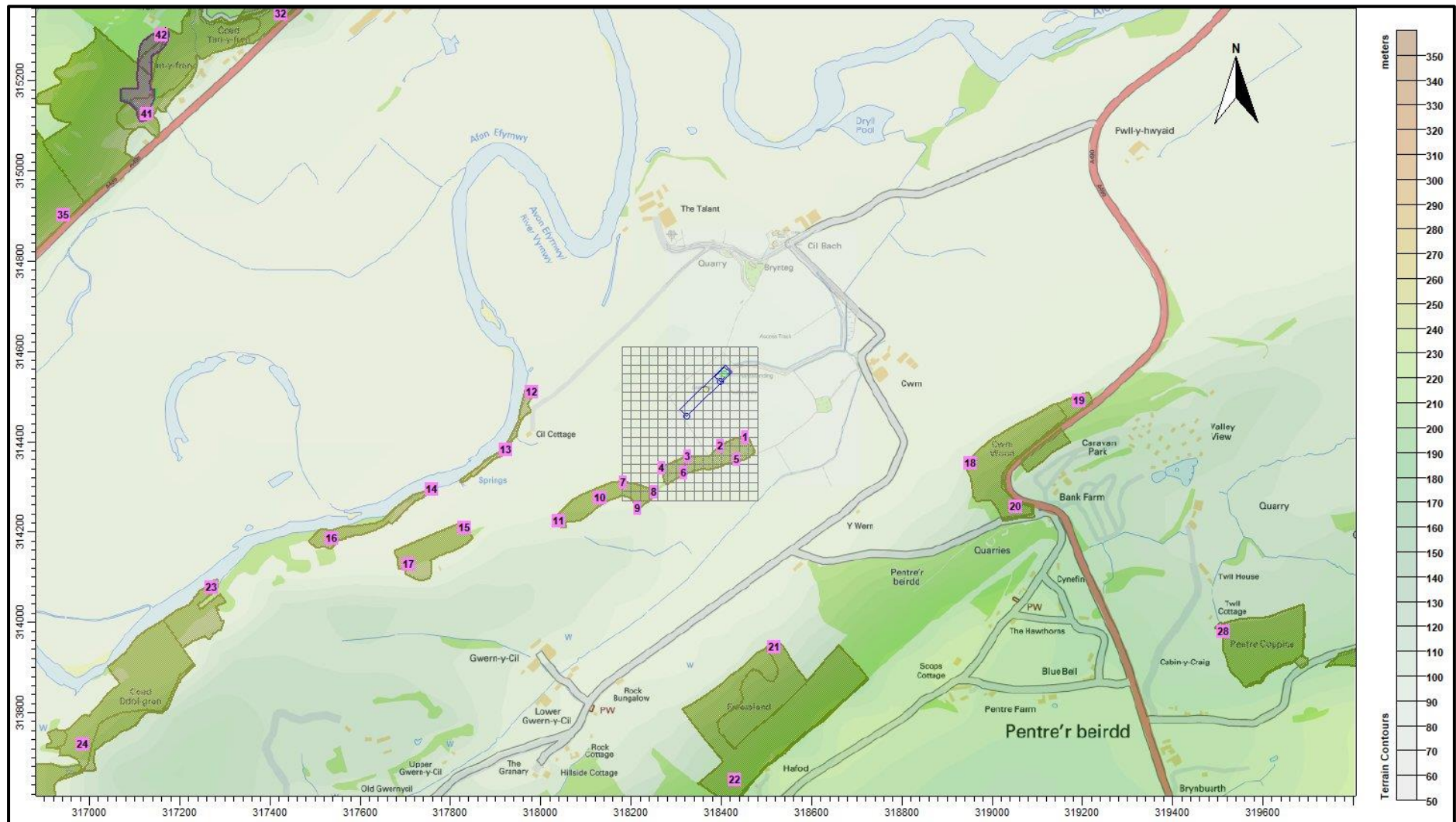
Figure 4a. The discrete receptors – a broad scale view



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Figure 4b. The discrete receptors and regular Cartesian grid – a closer view



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## 4.8 Deposition

The method used to model deposition of ammonia and consequent plume depletion is based on a document titled “Guidance on modelling the concentration and deposition of ammonia emitted from intensive farming” from the Environment Agency’s Air Quality Modelling and Assessment Unit, 22 November 2010. N.B. 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 0.015 m/s over heavily grazed grassland. Where deposition over water surfaces is calculated, a deposition velocity of 0.005 m/s is used.

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, has been used to define a deposition velocity field. The deposition velocities used are provided in Table 4.

*Table 4. Deposition velocities*

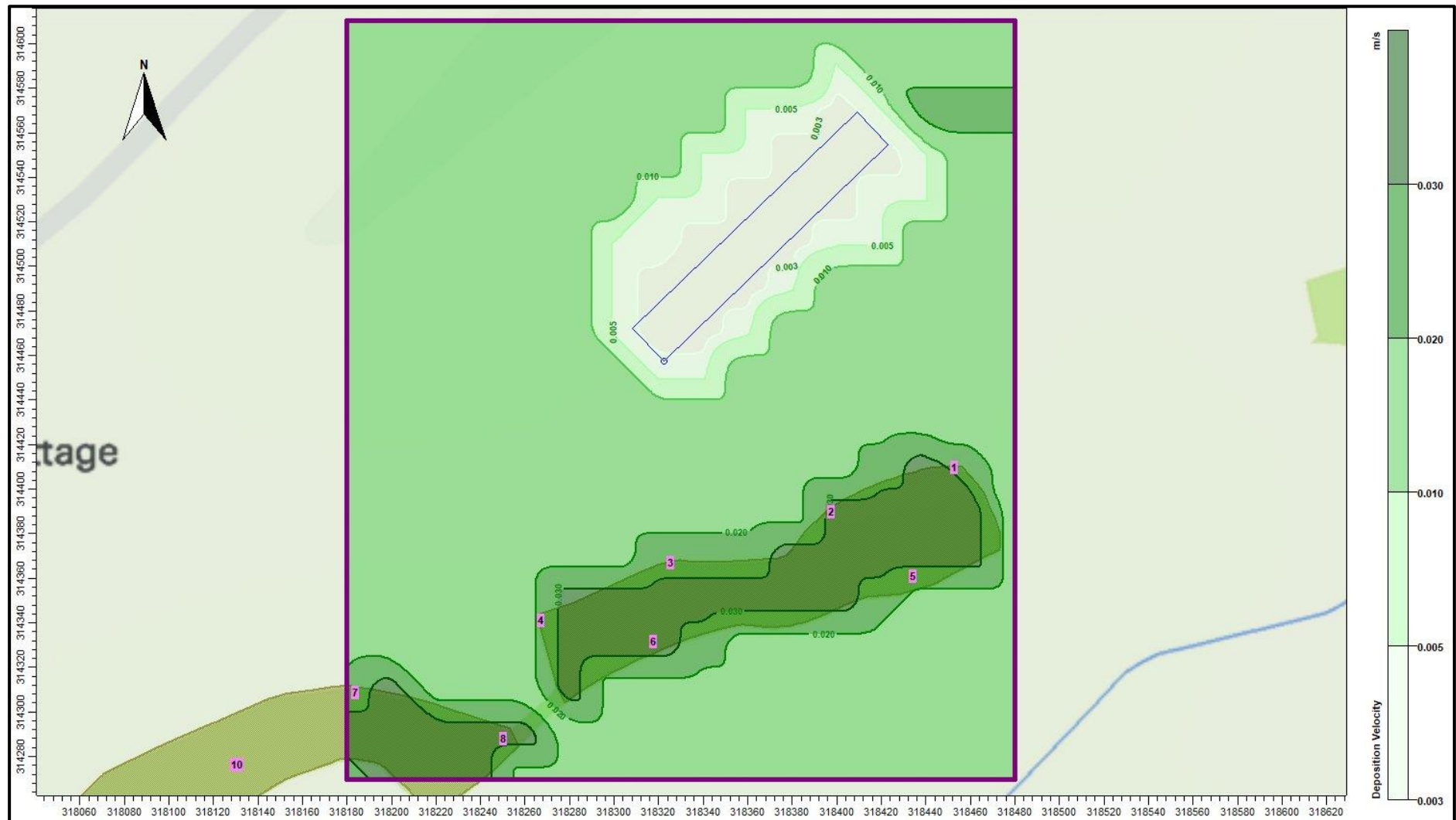
NH <sub>3</sub> concentration (PC + background) (µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	< 10	10 - 20	20 - 30	30 – 80	> 80
Deposition velocity – woodland (m/s)	0.03	0.015	0.01	0.005	0.003
Deposition velocity – short vegetation (m/s)	0.02 (0.015 over heavily grazed grassland)	0.015	0.01	0.005	0.003
Deposition velocity – 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 field is provided in Figure 5.



Figure 5. The spatially varying deposition field



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## 5. Details of the Model Runs and Results

### 5.1 Preliminary modelling

ADMS was run a total of sixteen times; once for each year of the meteorological record and 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 with a fixed deposition velocity of 0.003 m/s – GFS data <sup>1</sup>.

For each mode, statistics for the maximum annual mean ammonia concentration at each receptor were compiled for both the existing and proposed scenarios.

Details of the predicted annual mean ammonia concentrations at each receptor are provided in Table 5. In the Table, predicted ammonia concentrations, including those that would lead to a nitrogen deposition rate, that are in excess of the Natural Resources Wales upper threshold (8% of Critical Level or Load for a SPA/SAC/SSSI and 100% of a Critical Level or Load for an AW) are coloured red. Concentrations in the range between the Natural Resources Wales upper threshold and lower threshold (1% to 8% for a SPA/SAC/SSSI and 50%<sup>2</sup> to 100% for an AW) are coloured blue. For convenience, cells referring to the SAC or parts of SSSIs within the SAC are shaded purple, cells referring to the SSSIs are shaded green and cells referring to the AWs are shaded olive.

1. Note that for the existing scenario, the effects of calms are significant and therefore, a correction has been applied to the terrain and fixed deposition results. This correction is based upon the difference between the basic mode and calms mode results.
2. The Pre-February 2016 figure is retained.

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

Receptor number	X(m)	Y(m)	Designation	Maximum annual mean ammonia concentration - ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )							
				Existing				Proposed			
				GFS No Calms No Terrain	GFS Calms No Terrain	GFS No Calms Terrain	GFS Calms Correction Terrain Fixed depo 0.003 m/s	GFS No Calms No Terrain	GFS Calms No Terrain	GFS No Calms Terrain	GFS No Calms Terrain Fixed depo 0.003 m/s
1	318453	314409	AW	3.810	4.568	2.203	2.173	2.363	2.361	1.760	1.416
2	318397	314390	AW	3.802	4.333	2.389	2.187	2.526	2.523	2.317	1.745
3	318326	314367	AW	2.659	3.264	1.744	1.579	2.335	2.295	2.828	2.045
4	318267	314341	AW	1.708	2.065	1.919	1.559	1.699	1.701	1.906	1.398
5	318434	314361	AW	2.567	3.064	2.806	2.433	1.641	1.647	1.887	1.389
6	318318	314332	AW	2.007	2.466	1.580	1.388	1.637	1.606	2.432	1.702
7	318184	314309	AW	1.026	1.215	1.685	1.261	0.951	0.954	1.387	0.905
8	318250	314288	AW	1.209	1.506	1.248	0.992	1.100	1.102	1.325	0.933
9	318215	314253	AW	0.944	1.141	0.928	0.738	0.833	0.835	0.934	0.644
10	318131	314276	AW	0.739	0.905	1.271	0.910	0.656	0.660	1.015	0.652
11	318041	314223	AW	0.476	0.607	0.852	0.579	0.412	0.415	0.657	0.411
12	317980	314509	AW	0.815	0.934	0.149	0.160	0.715	0.716	0.223	0.204
13	317922	314382	AW	0.440	0.560	0.298	0.243	0.370	0.373	0.264	0.204
14	317758	314294	AW	0.264	0.335	0.266	0.189	0.213	0.214	0.215	0.142
15	317832	314208	AW	0.295	0.371	0.535	0.342	0.242	0.244	0.381	0.215
16	321813	312842	Gwen-y-Brain Dingle SSSI	0.017	0.021	0.010	0.006	0.018	0.018	0.011	0.006
17	314229	312501	Glasgoed, Meifod SSSI	0.011	0.014	0.022	0.010	0.011	0.011	0.021	0.010
18	317127	315126	Allat y Main Mine SSSI/SAC	0.107	0.123	0.109	0.069	0.087	0.087	0.246	0.122
19	317159	315301	Allat y Main Mine SSSI/SAC	0.100	0.114	0.136	0.082	0.080	0.080	0.238	0.127
20	317807	318151	Bryngwyn Hall Stables & Coach House SSSI/SAC	0.018	0.022	0.014	0.009	0.016	0.016	0.018	0.009
21	322085	311594	Granllyn SSSI/SAC	0.012	0.015	0.006	0.003	0.012	0.013	0.008	0.004

## 5.2 Detailed deposition modelling

The detailed modelling was carried out over a restricted domain where the preliminary modelling indicated that annual mean ammonia concentrations in the proposed scenario could potentially exceed the relevant lower threshold percentage of the relevant Critical Level or Critical Load for the site. The domain covers the proposed poultry house and closer parts of the unnamed AWs to the south and south-west. At all other receptors considered, the preliminary modelling indicated that ammonia levels (and nitrogen and acid deposition rates) would be below the Natural Resources Wales lower threshold percentage of Critical Level/Load for the designation of the site, or there is no Critical Level or Critical Load applicable.

The predicted maximum annual mean ground level ammonia concentrations and nitrogen deposition rates at the discrete receptors for the proposed scenario are shown in Table 6. In this table, predicted ammonia concentrations or nitrogen deposition rates that are in excess of the Natural Resources Wales upper threshold (8% of Critical Level or Load for a SAC/SSSI and 100% of Critical Level or Load for an AW) are coloured red. Concentrations that are in the range between the Natural Resources Wales lower and upper thresholds (1% to 8% for a SAC/SSSI and 50%<sup>1</sup> to 100% for an AW) are coloured blue.

Contour plots of the predicted maximum annual mean ammonia concentration and the maximum nitrogen deposition rate for the proposed scenario are shown in Figures 6a and 6b.

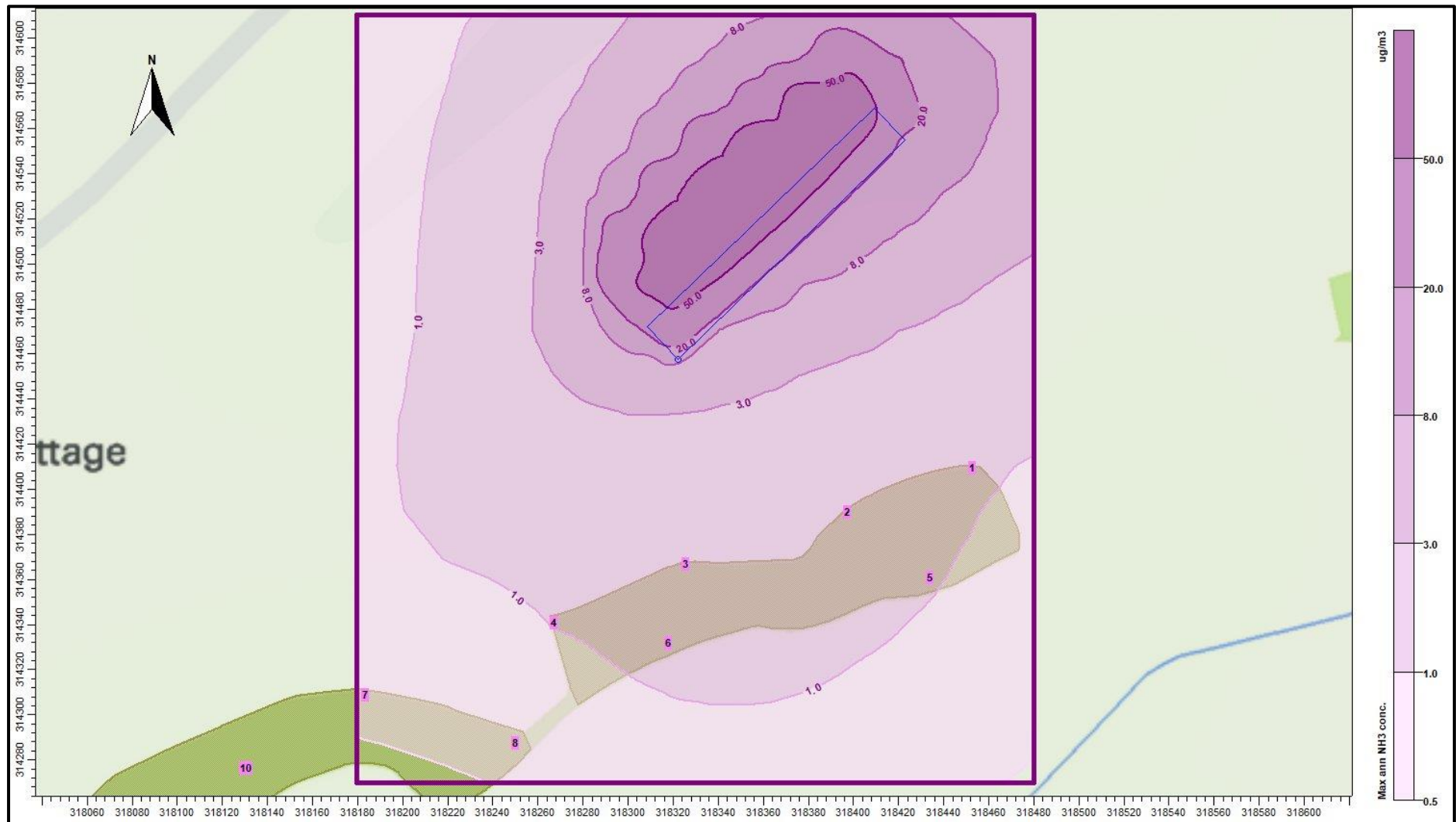
1. The pre-February 2016 figure is retained.

Table 6. Predicted maximum annual mean ammonia concentrations and nitrogen deposition at the discrete receptors – proposed scenario

Receptor number	X(m)	Y(m)	Name	Site Parameters			Maximum annual ammonia concentration		Maximum annual nitrogen deposition rate	
				Deposition Velocity	Critical Level ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )	Critical Load (kg/ha)	Process Contribution ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )	%age of Critical Level	Process Contribution (kg/ha)	%age of Critical Load
1	318453	314409	AW	0.030	1.0	10.0	1.103	110.3	8.59	85.9
2	318397	314390	AW	0.030	1.0	10.0	1.329	132.9	10.35	103.5
3	318326	314367	AW	0.030	1.0	10.0	1.550	155.0	12.07	120.7
4	318267	314341	AW	0.030	1.0	10.0	1.018	101.8	7.93	79.3
5	318434	314361	AW	0.030	1.0	10.0	1.026	102.6	7.99	79.9
6	318318	314332	AW	0.030	1.0	10.0	1.195	119.5	9.31	93.1
7	318184	314309	AW	0.030	1.0	10.0	0.593	59.3	4.62	46.2
8	318250	314288	AW	0.030	1.0	10.0	0.612	61.2	4.77	47.7

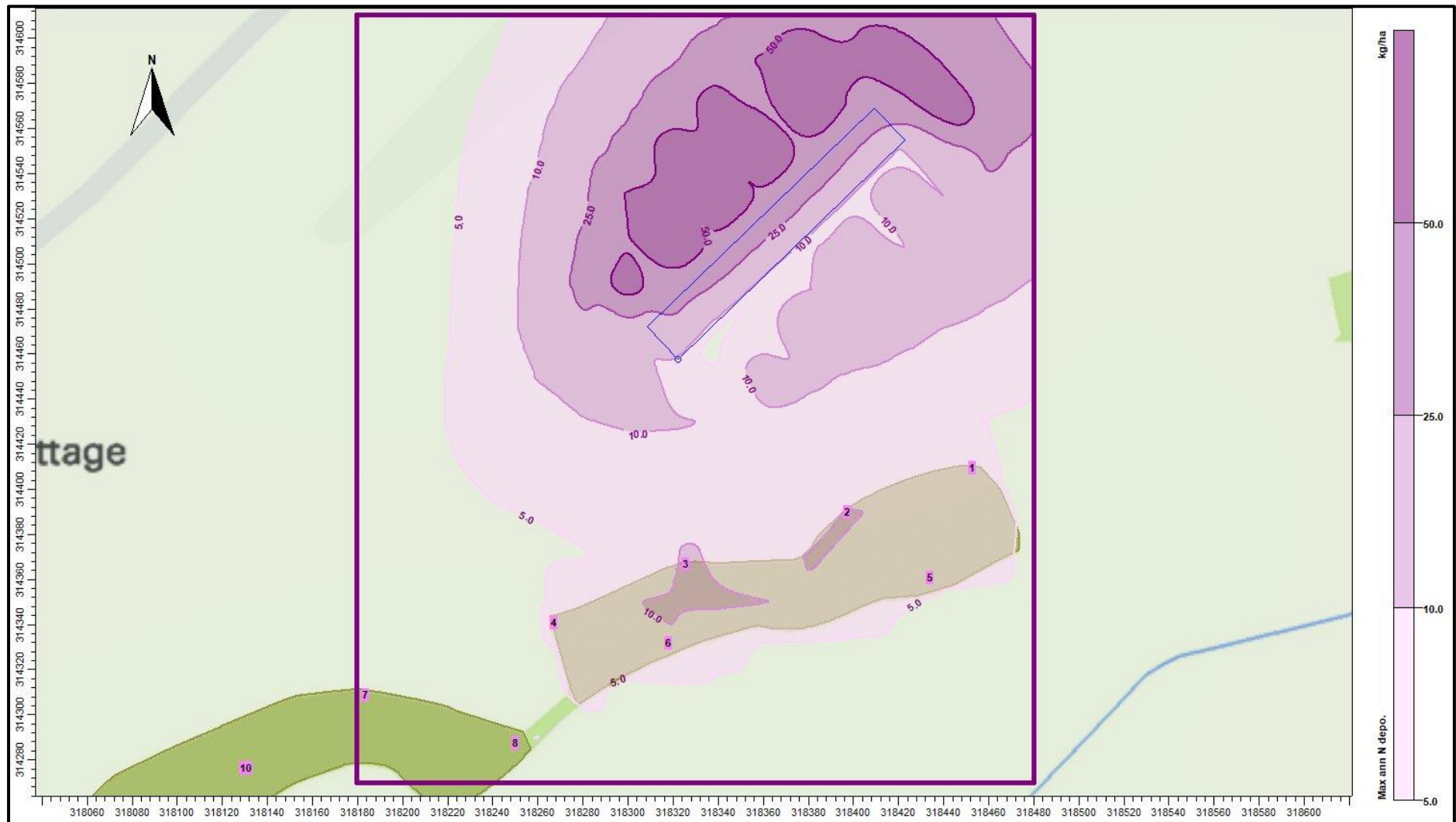


Figure 6a. Maximum annual ammonia concentration – proposed scenario



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Figure 6b. Maximum annual nitrogen deposition rates – proposed scenario



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## 6. Summary and Conclusions

AS Modelling & Data Ltd. has been instructed by Rosina Bloor of Roger Parry & Partners LLP, on behalf of the applicant Mr. D. Hughes, to use computer modelling to assess the impact of ammonia emissions from the existing and proposed free range egg laying chicken houses at Cil Mawr, Meifod, Powys. SY22 6XZ.

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.

### Preliminary modelling

The preliminary modelling predicts that:

- At closer parts of the unnamed AWs to the south and south-west the process contribution to the annual nitrogen deposition rate would potentially exceed Natural Resources Wales lower threshold (100% for an AW) of the precautionary Critical Level of  $1.0 \mu\text{g-NH}_3/\text{m}^3$  under both the existing and proposed scenarios. However, the area of exceedance would be smaller under the proposed scenario and in general annual mean ammonia concentration would be lower.
- At all other sites considered, the preliminary modelling predicts that the process contribution to the annual ammonia concentration and the nitrogen deposition rate would be below Natural Resources Wales lower threshold percentage of Critical Level for the site (1% for a SAC/SSSI and 100% for non-statutory sites), or there is no Critical Level or Critical Load applicable.

### Detailed deposition modelling

The detailed modelling predicts that, for the proposed scenario, when deposition and consequent plume depletion are fully considered:

- Over approximately 0.7 ha of the unnamed AW to the south, the process contribution to the annual ammonia concentration would be slightly in excess of the Natural Resources Wales lower threshold (100% for a SAC/SSSI) of the precautionary Critical Level of  $1.0 \mu\text{g-NH}_3/\text{m}^3$ . There is also a less significant exceedance of the Critical Load of  $10.0 \text{ kg-N/ha/y}$ .

### Mitigation

Where exceedances of the upper threshold are predicted at a non-statutory site, some form of mitigation is usually required. AS Modelling & Data Ltd. would recommend that, if available, to compensate for possible detrimental effects at the nearby AWs, the woods are actively managed for wildlife, and/or, that land of at least a similar area to the exceedance of 100% of the Critical Level is

set aside for nature conservation and be planted with native species. Alternatively, or additionally, unfertilised and only lightly grazed buffer zones and corridors could be set up around and between the AWs; such buffer zones and corridors can greatly enhance bio-diversity over time. Also, research by Beasley et al, 2013 (Defra project AC0201) have found that tree planting locally can be used as a measure to help protect downwind sensitive ecosystems from ammonia emissions from agricultural installations.

It should be noted that modelling predicts that the area of exceedance would be smaller under the proposed scenario and in general annual mean ammonia concentration would be lower. Additionally, due to the improvement in initial dispersion characteristics of the emissions from the proposed housing it is likely that the magnitude of short term exposures to ammonia (which cause the most significant direct harm to lower plants) at the nearby AWs would be significantly lower under the proposed scenario.

## 7. References

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