

# **Environment Agency permitting decisions**

## **Surrender**

We have decided to accept the surrender of the permit for Blaydon Dairy operated by Medina Processing Blaydon Limited.

The permit number is EPR/FP3737KL.

We are satisfied that the necessary measures have been taken to avoid any pollution risk and to return the site to a satisfactory state.

We consider in reaching that decision we have taken into account all relevant considerations and legal requirements.

## **Purpose of this document**

This decision document:

- explains how the operator's application has been determined
- provides a record of the decision-making process
- shows how all relevant factors have been taken into account

## **Structure of this document**

- Key issues
- Annex 1 the decision checklist

## **Key issues of the decision**

### **Background**

The installation is located at Chainbridge Road, Blaydon, Tyne and Wear, NE21 5SZ. The permit authorised two listed activities under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010:

- Section 6.8 A(1)(e): Treating and processing milk, the quantity of milk received being more than 200 tonnes per day (average value on an annual basis).
- Section 5.4 A(1)(a)(i): Disposal of non-hazardous waste in a facility with a capacity exceeding 50 tonnes per day by biological treatment.

The installation specifically undertook processing and pasteurisation of raw milk, cream processing and pasteurisation, packaging, chilled storage and distribution. The site also operated an effluent treatment plant. The site also performs three Directly Associated Activities (DAA), specifically two steam-raising boilers (7.12 MW) for the supply of steam to product processing lines,

packaging of the finished products into a variety of containers prior to despatch and the bulk storage of process wastes.

Annual production of milk and cream was 156,272 and 7,470 tonnes respectively. Operations and production was continuous, operating 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. In June 2011, operations at Blaydon Dairy ceased and the site was subsequently sold. Therefore, the operator decided to surrender the permit in full.

### **Decommissioning and Pollution Risk**

The operator has submitted a site condition report which demonstrates that all of the process equipment and site kit associated with the activities undertaken at the site have been fully decommissioned to an acceptable level. The decommissioning took place from October 2010 till the final site inspection by the Environment Agency in June 2011. Decommissioning was completed in the following steps:

- Process equipment and all above-ground storage tanks were made safe, emptied, and cleaned prior to selling them on to third parties. Where the third parties removed the equipment, the dismantling was supervised by Medina Processing Blaydon Limited personnel.
- Underground diesel and gas storage tanks were emptied and cleaned out in October 2011. The tanks were the subject of a pressure test in 2004 and a visual inspection in 2011. Levels of oils or gas stored in these tanks was maintained against the levels removed. These records state that no leaks were detected. These tanks will remain in situ.
- Unused raw materials were packaged and sent back to the suppliers or to other sites controlled by the operator.
- All remaining waste was removed by licensed third party waste carriers.
- Once production operations ceased, the entire drainage system was decommissioned and was subject to a 'Clean-in-Place' once all potentially polluting sources had been removed from the site. Clean-in-Place is a cleaning method for closed vessels, interior surfaces and pipes and other process equipment without the requirement for disassembly.
- The effluent treatment plant was also decommissioned in June 2011 by third parties.

All equipment and infrastructure was well maintained throughout the operation of the regulated facility. All activities were undertaken within a building and any external storage took place on sealed concrete. Regular visual inspections of the storage areas were maintained to ensure adequate containment. Throughout the operations of the permit, there were no relevant environmental incidents or pollution events.

While no pollution incidents were recorded, groundwater monitoring was undertaken from 2006 to 2014. Borehole BH2 had indicated that there was a significant presence of hydrocarbons within the vicinity of the underground storage tanks. This monitoring was required to demonstrate if the growth in

total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) shown between September 2008 till April 2014 were the cause of on site operations. Due to difficulties in data collection for borehole BH2 in the early phases of the monitoring regime (insufficient samples), it was difficult to demonstrate that the high concentrations exhibited in the recent samples were not the result of the facility operations. However, we have assessed the site condition report and have accepted the operator's reasoning behind the high TPH concentrations. The operator has demonstrated that the high levels were the cause of historic contamination already caused by free phase hydrocarbons associated with tanks removed prior to the permit determination. Therefore, the current groundwater quality is not due to the activities carried out under this permit.

We are satisfied that the decommissioning has been completed to an acceptable standard with no evidence of pollution incidents occurring. All potential sources of pollution have been removed from the site and we conclude that surrendering of the permit will not lead to pollution of the environment.

### Annex 1: decision checklist

This document should be read in conjunction with the Duly Making checklist, the application and supporting information and permit/notice.

Aspect considered	Justification / Detail	Criteria met
		Yes
The site		
Extent of the surrender application	<p>The operator has provided a plan showing the extent of the site of the facility that is to be surrendered.</p> <p>We consider this plan to be satisfactory.</p>	✓
Pollution risk	<p>We are satisfied that the necessary measures have been taken to avoid a pollution risk resulting from the operation of the regulated facility.</p>	✓
Satisfactory state	<p>We are satisfied that the necessary measures have been taken to return the site of the regulated facility to a satisfactory state.</p> <p>In coming to this decision we have had regard to the state of the site before the facility was put into operation.</p>	✓