

Environment Agency permitting decisions

Variation

We have decided to issue the variation for Mease Meadows Farm Pig Unit operated by Midlands Pig Producers Limited.

The variation number is EPR/GP3939VQ/V002.

The permit number is EPR/GP3939VQ.

We consider in reaching that decision we have taken into account all relevant considerations and legal requirements and that the permit will ensure that the appropriate level of environmental protection is provided.

Purpose of this document

This decision document:

- explains how the application has been determined;
- provides a record of the decision-making process;
- shows how all relevant factors have been taken into account; and
- justifies the specific conditions in the permit other than those in our generic permit template.

Unless the decision document specifies otherwise we have accepted the applicant's proposals.

Structure of this document

- Key issues: Ammonia Assessment; Odour; Groundwater / Soil Monitoring; Improvement Conditions; and Industrial Emissions Directive;
- Annex 1 the decision checklist; and
- Annex 2 the consultation and web publicising responses.

Key issues of the decision

Ammonia Impacts

There is one Special Area of Conservation (SAC) within 10km of the site and one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within 5km of the site. There is also one Local Wildlife Site (LWS) within 2km of the site.

Assessment of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

The River Mease is designated as a SAC and SSSI. It is located approximately 200m south of the installation boundary. Natural England have agreed in consultation that as the habitat site is designated for purely aquatic features and has

a low overall sensitivity that no Critical Level has been set for ammonia assessment. Therefore it is possible to conclude no damage to the River Mease and no further impact assessment has been undertaken.

Assessment of Local Wildlife Site (LWS)

Raddle Lane (hedge 2) LWS is located 1.6km north west of Mease Meadows Farm Pig Unit. The following trigger thresholds have been applied for the assessment of LWSs. If the Process Contribution (PC) is less than 100% of relevant Critical Level or Load, then the farm can be permitted.

Screening using Ammonia Screening Tool v4.4 has indicated that the PC from Mease Meadows Farm Pig Unit is less than $1\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (i.e. less than 100% of the precautionary $1\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ critical level) and therefore the PC is insignificant (See table 1 below).

Where the precautionary level of $1\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ is used, and the PC is assessed to be less than 100%, the site automatically screens out as insignificant, and no further assessment of critical load is necessary. The PC at these sites has been screened as insignificant. It is possible to conclude no significant pollution will occur at these sites and no further assessment is required.

Table 1 – LWS Assessment

Site	AST Predicted Ammonia ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)	CLe Ammonia	PC as % of CLe Ammonia
Raddle Lane (hedge 2)	0.769	$1\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	76.9%

Odour

The operator has provided an Odour Management Plan (reference *ED06 Odour Management Plan Review – Mease Meadows Farm 17/04/2014*) with the application, as there are sensitive receptors within 400m of the installation. There is no history of substantiated odour complaints relating to the installation or spreading of dirty water offsite.

Potentially significant sources of odour are: pig house ventilation outlets; carcass storage and disposal; slurry and manure removal; washing operations; and slurry and manure storage. Odour is expected to peak during wash out times.

Mitigation techniques on site include, but are not limited to, the following: staged protein reduction diets for age of pig; adequate drainage facilities to ensure liquids do not stagnate on surface areas; wind direction is observed when removing manure; generous amounts of straw bedding is used to minimise manure present; yards over which manure is removed/pigs are transported are regularly swept clean and run off from these areas is directed to the dirty water lagoon; potentially odorous spillages are cleaned up promptly; the dirty water lagoon is inspected daily to ensure minimum freeboard is available and prevent spillage; carcasses are disposed of promptly in an on-site incinerator; and feed is distributed via sealed pipe work.

The OMP has been assessed using Environment Agency Guidance *H4 Odour Management – How to Comply with your Environmental Permit* and the *Poultry*

Industry Good Practice Checklist. We are happy that the control and contingency measures on site are sufficient to control odorous emissions from the site. We have therefore approved the Odour Management Plan for Mease Meadows Farm Pig Unit.

Groundwater / Soil Monitoring

As a result of the requirements of the Industrial Emissions Directive, all permits are now required to contain condition 3.1.3 relating to groundwater monitoring. However, the Environment Agency's H5 Guidance states **that it is only necessary for the operator to take samples** of soil or groundwater and measure levels of contamination where the evidence that there is, or could be existing contamination and:

- The environmental risk assessment has identified that the same contaminants are a particular hazard; or
- The environmental risk assessment has identified that the same contaminants are a hazard and your risk assessment has identified a possible pathway to land or groundwater.

H5 Guidance further states that it is **not essential for the Operator** to take samples of soil or groundwater and measure levels of contamination where:

- The environmental risk assessment identifies no hazards to land or groundwater; or
- Where the environmental risk assessment identifies only limited hazards to land and groundwater and there is no reason to believe that there could be historic contamination by those substances that present the hazard; or
- Where the environmental risk assessment identifies hazards to land and groundwater but there is evidence that there is no historic contamination by those substances that pose the hazard.

The site condition report in the original permit application for Mease Meadows Farm Pig Unit which we assessed during permit determination, demonstrated the installation activities have little likelihood of causing pollution (as detailed in original permit decision document). We are satisfied that there are no hazards to land or groundwater and no historic contamination on site that may present a hazard.

Therefore, although this condition is included in the permit, no groundwater or soil monitoring will be required at this installation as a result.

Improvement Conditions

The original permit included five Improvement Conditions (IC's) listed in Table S1.3. IC's 3, 4 and 5 relating to diffuse pollution from food mixing; site drainage; and housing and management practices respectively have all been completed.

IC1 relating to bunding of agricultural fuel oil stores has not been completed. This IC has been extended until 6 months from this permit issue.

IC2 relating to covering of slurry store is not completed. This will remain in the permit.

Industrial Emissions Directive

The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 were made on the 20 February and came into force on 27 February. These Regulations transpose the requirements of the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

This permit has been consolidated and amended so that it now implements the requirements of the EU Directive on Industrial Emissions.

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
Consultation		
Scope of consultation	The consultation requirements were identified and implemented. The decision was taken in accordance with RGN 6 High Profile Sites, our Public Participation Statement and our Working Together Agreements.	✓
Responses to consultation and web publicising	The web publicising and consultation responses (Annex 2) were taken into account in the decision. The decision was taken in accordance with our guidance.	✓
Operator		
Control of the facility	We are satisfied that the applicant (now the operator) is the person who will have control over the operation of the facility after the grant of the permit. The decision was taken in accordance with EPR RGN 1 Understanding the meaning of operator.	✓
European Directives		
Applicable directives	All applicable European directives have been considered in the determination of the application. Refer to key issues section above for further information regarding the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).	✓
The site		
Extent of the site of the facility	The operator has provided a plan which we consider is satisfactory, showing the extent of the site of the facility. A plan is included in the permit and the operator is required to carry on the permitted activities within the site boundary.	✓
Biodiversity, Heritage, Landscape	The application is within the relevant distance criteria of a site of heritage, landscape or nature conservation, and/or protected species or habitat.	✓

Aspect considered	Justification / Detail	Criteria met Yes
and Nature Conservation	<p>A full assessment of the application and its potential to affect the sites has been carried out as part of the permitting process. We consider that the application will not affect the features of the sites for the reasons outlined in the Key Issues section.</p> <p>An Appendix 11 Assessment for SAC's and an Appendix 4 Assessment for SSSI's has been saved to EDRM for information only on 03/07/2014. An 'other nature conservation sites' proforma was saved to EDRM for information on 03/07/2014.</p>	
Environmental Risk Assessment and operating techniques		
Environmental risk	<p>We have reviewed the operator's assessment of the environmental risk from the facility.</p> <p>The operator's risk assessment is satisfactory.</p> <p>The assessment shows that, applying the conservative criteria in our guidance on Environmental Risk Assessment, all emissions may be categorised as environmentally insignificant.</p>	✓
Operating techniques	<p>We have reviewed the techniques used by the operator and compared these with the relevant guidance notes.</p> <p>The operator has proposed the following key techniques:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dirty water storage facilities are in place on site; • Nipple drinkers are used to reduce wastage of water and maintain dry litter; • Protein is reduced over the growing cycle by providing different feeds and phosphorus levels in rations are reduced over the production cycle; • Grain and other ingredients are stored within an enclosed building, where the milling and mixing activity also takes place. The mill is fitted with a cyclone and dust filters and these are maintained in accordance with manufacturers instructions to ensure that dust emissions to air are minimised; • The incinerator plant is approved by the local Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA), under the Animal By-Products Regulations (ABPR). <p>The proposed techniques for priorities for control are in</p>	✓

Aspect considered	Justification / Detail	Criteria met
		Yes
	<p>line with the benchmark levels contained in SGN EPR6.09 'How to comply with your environmental permit for intensive farming (version 2)' Technical Guidance Note and we consider them to represent appropriate techniques for the facility.</p> <p>We consider that the operating techniques specified in the permit reflect the BAT for the installation.</p>	
The permit conditions		
Updating permit conditions during consolidation.	<p>We have updated previous permit conditions to those in the new generic permit template as part of permit consolidation. The new conditions have the same meaning as those in the previous permit(s).</p> <p>The operator has agreed that the new conditions are acceptable.</p>	✓
Incorporating the application	<p>We have specified that the applicant must operate the permit in accordance with descriptions in the application, including all additional information received as part of the determination process.</p> <p>These descriptions are specified in the Operating Techniques table in the permit.</p>	✓
Operator Competence		
Environment management system	<p>There is no known reason to consider that the operator will not have the management systems to enable it to comply with the permit conditions. The decision was taken in accordance with RGN 5 on Operator Competence.</p>	✓
Relevant convictions	<p>The National Enforcement Database has been checked to ensure that all relevant convictions have been declared.</p> <p>No relevant convictions were found.</p> <p>The operator satisfies the criteria in RGN 5 on Operator Competence.</p>	✓

Aspect considered	Justification / Detail	Criteria met
		Yes
Financial provision	There is no known reason to consider that the operator will not be financially able to comply with the permit conditions. The decision was taken in accordance with RGN 5 on Operator Competence.	✓

Annex 2: Consultation and web publicising responses

Summary of responses to consultation and web publication and the way in which we have taken these into account in the determination process.

Response received from
Lichfield District Council - Planning department – 16 th June 2014
Brief summary of issues raised
The response indicated that the Local Authority Planning officer has no significant concerns regarding this installation.
Summary of actions taken or show how this has been covered
No action necessary.

The following organisations were also consulted, however no response was received:

- Health and Safety Executive;
- Lichfield District Council – Environmental Health department.

This proposal was also publicised on the Environment Agency's website between 04/06/2014 and 03/07/2014, but no representations were received during this period.