

Environment Agency permitting decisions

Part surrender

We have decided to accept the surrender of part of the permit for Didcot A Power Station operated by RWE Generation UK plc.

The permit number is EPR/YP3030LR.

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
- justifies the specific conditions in the permit as a result of the partial surrender.

Structure of this document

- Key issues
- Annex 1 the decision checklist.

Key issues

Scheduled Activities:

RWE Generation UK plc have closed Didcot A Power Station and have ceased commercial electricity generation. The power station was opted out under Article 4(4) of the Large Combustion Plant Directive 2001/80/EC, the terms of the Directive were that operation was permitted to a maximum of 20,000 hours between 01 January 2008 and 31 December 2015. Didcot A reached this operational limit on 22 March 2013. The site has since been undergoing decommissioning, demolition and remediation as part of a phased programme of closure works. Completed closure works in the southern area of the power station has returned this part of the permitted site back to a satisfactory state ready for partial surrender of the Environmental Permit.

The Operator has applied for a partial surrender for the southern area of the power station as the northern area of the site is not yet returned back to a satisfactory state. However, in order for the Operator to hold a valid Environmental Permit under The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 and The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 whilst working towards full surrender of the northern site, a scheduled activity must still be in place for the installation. It has been agreed with all parties involved to keep the following scheduled activity within Table S1.1 – Scheduled Activities until the northern part of the installation is ready for surrender:

- S1.1 A(1)(a) – Burning any fuel in an appliance with a rated thermal input of 50MW or more.

It should be noted that there is no expectation that the Operator will exercise the use of this scheduled activity as the main operation of commercial energy generation at this site has ceased.

Changes to the Environmental Permit:

Following a review of the following application documents the Environment Agency has made appropriate changes to Tables S1.1, S1.2, S4.2 and S5.1 as well as including an amended Site Plan within the Environmental Permit for Didcot A Power Station:

- 'Didcot A – Partial Permit Surrender Supporting Document' (October 2014)
- 'Verification Plan for the Land Remediation Works at Didcot A Power Station, Didcot, Oxfordshire' (September 2014)
- 'Validation Report for the Land Remediation Works at Didcot A Power Station' (October 2014).

Annex 1: decision checklist

This document should be read in conjunction with the Duly Making checklist, the application and supporting information, Site Condition Report Evaluation Template and the partial surrender permit.

Aspect considered	Justification / Detail	Criteria met
		Yes
Receipt of submission		
Identifying confidential information	We have not identified any information provided as part of the application that we consider to be confidential. The decision was taken in accordance with our guidance on commercial confidentiality.	✓
The facility		
The regulated facility	The permitted regulated facilities have changed as a result of the partial surrender. Please refer to the key issues section of this document for further details.	✓
The permit conditions		
Changes to permit conditions	Some of the permit tables have changed as a result of the partial surrender. Please refer to the key issues section of this document.	✓
The site		
Extent of the surrender application	The operator has provided a plan showing the extent of the site of the facility that is to be surrendered. We consider this plan to be satisfactory. Please refer to the key issues section of this document.	✓
Pollution risk	We are satisfied that the necessary measures have been taken to avoid a pollution risk resulting from the operation of the regulated facility.	✓
Satisfactory state	We are satisfied that the necessary measures have been taken to return the site of the regulated facility to a satisfactory state. In coming to this decision we have had regard to the state of the site before the facility was put into operation.	✓