

Permitting decisions

Bespoke permit

We have decided to grant the permit for Blancomet Recycling, Opal Way operated by Blancomet Recycling UK Limited.

The permit number is EPR/KP3439JU

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 provides a record of the decision making process. It summarises the decision making process in the decision checklist to show how all relevant factors have been taken into account.

This decision document provides a record of the decision making process. It:

- highlights key issues in the determination
- summarises the decision making process in the decision checklist to show how all relevant factors have been taken into account

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

Read the permitting decisions in conjunction with the environmental permit. The introductory note summarises what the permit covers.

Key issues of the decision

Blancomet Recycling UK Limited have been treating catalytic convertors, end of life vehicle wiring looms and storing alloy wheels at Opal Way under an enforcement position. The application is to operate an installation to recover precious metals from hazardous and non-hazardous automotive catalysts as a preparatory step prior to further treatment, to store and treat lead acid batteries, granulation of wiring looms and storage of alloy wheels. During determination the applicant also requested that they be able to accept end of life vehicle printed circuit boards for storage. The operator will undertake this under Schedule 1, Section 5.6 Part A1 (a) and Section S5.3 Part A1 (a) of the Environmental Permitting Regulations.

Some catalytic convertors contain a support mat made from refractory ceramic fibre (RCF) used to protect the honeycomb centre and as insulation to maintain the high temperatures needed for the reactions to take place within the catalyst. This RCF has properties similar to asbestos as is classed as hazardous waste and needs to be separated from the honeycomb and handle in accordance with the Environment Agency's quick guide 'Catalytic Converters containing Refractory Ceramic Fibre'. During determination it became clear that the current operating techniques did not separate the RCF from the honeycomb core prior to milling which is contrary to the Hazardous Waste Regulations as it involves the mixing hazardous and non hazardous wastes and mean diluting and disposing of the RCF. The operator agreed to amend their operating

techniques to ensure the RCF is removed prior to milling and handled appropriately. The permit is drafted to make this clear and references the revised operating techniques and Environment Agency's quick guide 'Catalytic Converters containing Refractory Ceramic Fibre'.

The plant is located entirely within a building with air from around potentially dusty operations extracted by Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) systems. Dust from this collected air is abated using single stage HEPA bag filters, with the outlets discharged within the building. There is no external point source emission to air from the LEV system.

A number of waste codes were requested within the application and during determination but it was agreed that they were not all necessary for the activities at the facility. The final list of permitted waste codes were agreed with the operator and area officer during determination and accurately describe the waste accepted for treatment/storage.

The operator had applied to accept 17,500 tonnes per annum (tpa) of hazardous waste (catalytic convertors and lead acid batteries) and 1,200 tpa of non-hazardous waste (some catalytic convertors, wiring looms and alloy wheels). During determination to operator requested to increase the tonnage of wiring looms accepted for treatment, this was demonstrated to be acceptable (including within the FPP), therefore the permitted tonnage of non-hazardous waste is 4,800 tpa.

All treatment take place in an enclosed building and all wastes are stored in covered areas that are designed and constructed to prevent ingress of rain and surface water. The site discharge to sewer is via an interceptor and consists only of rain/uncontaminated surface water.

In addition to the activities currently being carried out (under the enforcement position), the operator has applied to treat lead acid batteries and store the acid at the site. It has been agreed that it is important to permit the activities that are currently taking place and to include pre-operational conditions within the permit requiring the operator to provide more information before commencing the lead acid battery treatment, the pre-operational conditions cover the:

- Operating techniques and storage arrangements;
- Leak testing of acid storage tank and pipe work; and
- Demonstrate Approved Battery Treatment Operator (ABTO) status.

It is considered BAT for lead acid batteries to be transferred/ received at the site in battery boxes. The Site Working Plan states that 'All batteries will be delivered in sealed, plastic containers', this is therefore considered BAT for the waste acceptance.

The lead plates should be dry before being placed into bags for storage. The Site Working Plan describes that once removed from the plastic casing the lead plates are placed on specially designed shelves to dry, this process is expedited by the use of an air blade drying system.

The operator has demonstrated that they are registered with wamitab for the high risk tier Hazardous Waste Treatment qualification but are not currently qualified. An improvement condition is included to ensure the correct qualification is achieved.

Decision checklist

Aspect considered	Decision
Receipt of application	
Confidential information	A claim for commercial or industrial confidentiality has not been made.
Identifying confidential information	We have not identified information provided as part of the application that we consider to be confidential.
Consultation	
Consultation	<p>The consultation requirements were identified in accordance with the Environmental Permitting Regulations and our public participation statement.</p> <p>The application was publicised on the GOV.UK website.</p> <p>We consulted the following organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local authority planning and environmental health (Stafford Borough Council) • Health and Safety Executive • Director of PH/PHE • Sewage Undertaker <p>Responses were received from Environmental Protection at Stafford Borough Council and PHE. The comments and our responses are summarised in the consultation section.</p>
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 our guidance on legal operator for environmental permits.
The facility	
The regulated facility	<p>We considered the extent and nature of the facilities at the site in accordance with RGN2 'Understanding the meaning of regulated facility', Appendix 2 of RGN 2 'Defining the scope of the installation', Appendix 1 of RGN 2 'Interpretation of Schedule 1', guidance on waste recovery plans and permits.</p> <p>The extent of the facilities are defined in the site plan and in the permit. The activities are defined in table S1.1 of the permit.</p>
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. The plan is included in the permit.

Aspect considered	Decision
Site condition report	The operator has provided a description of the condition of the site, which we consider is satisfactory. The decision was taken in accordance with our guidance on site condition reports and baseline reporting under the Industrial Emissions Directive.
Biodiversity, heritage, landscape and nature conservation	<p>The application is within the relevant distance criteria of a site of heritage, landscape or nature conservation, and/or protected species or habitat.</p> <p>We have assessed the application and its potential to affect all known sites of nature conservation, landscape and heritage and/or protected species or habitats identified in the nature conservation screening report as part of the permitting process.</p> <p>We consider that the application will not affect any sites of nature conservation, landscape and heritage, and/or protected species or habitats identified.</p> <p>We have not consulted Natural England on the application. The decision was taken in accordance with our guidance.</p>
Environmental risk assessment	
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>
Operating techniques	
Drafting notes for operating techniques	<p>The operating techniques are in accordance with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Agency's quick guide 'Catalytic Converters containing Refractory Ceramic Fibre'; • Sector Guidance Note S5.06 - Guidance for the recovery and disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous waste; • Develop a management system: environmental permits ; and • Fire Prevention Plan; environmental permits.
General operating techniques	<p>We have reviewed the techniques used by the operator and compared these with the relevant guidance notes and we consider them to represent appropriate techniques for the facility.</p> <p>The operating techniques that the applicant must use are specified in table S1.2 in the environmental permit.</p>
Fire prevention plan	<p>We have assessed the fire prevention plan and are satisfied that it meets the measures and objectives set out in the Fire Prevention Plan guidance.</p> <p>An FPP for the site was submitted with the application, however, FPPs are not required for hazardous wastes (compliance with SGN S5.06 is required instead), and the non-hazardous wastes present on site are not considered to pose a significant fire risk due to their nature and quantity of materials.</p>

Aspect considered	Decision
Dust management plan	We have assessed the Dust management plan and are satisfied that it is appropriate for the site operations.
Permit conditions	
Use of conditions other than those from the template	Based on the information in the application, we consider that we do not need to impose conditions other than those in our permit template.
Waste types	<p>We have specified the permitted waste types, descriptions and quantities, which can be accepted at the regulated facility.</p> <p>We are satisfied that the operator can accept these wastes for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they are suitable for the proposed activities • the proposed infrastructure is appropriate • the environmental risk assessment is acceptable. <p>We have excluded the following wastes:</p> <p>20 01 33</p> <p>20 01 40</p> <p>19 12 02</p> <p>19 12 03</p> <p>These are excluded as it was agreed that they were not appropriate to describe the end of life vehicle wastes accepted at the site. Other more appropriate codes (EWC 16) are used to more accurately describe the wastes accepted.</p> <p>We made these decisions with respect to waste types in accordance with Environment Agency's quick guide 'Catalytic Converters containing Refractory Ceramic Fibre'.</p>
Pre-operational conditions	<p>Based on the information in the application, we consider that we need to impose pre-operational conditions.</p> <p>The operator has applied to treat lead acid batteries and store the acid at the site, pre-operational conditions are included in the permit to agree the following prior to the commencement of this activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating techniques and storage arrangements; • Leak testing of acid storage tank and pipe work; and • Demonstrate Approved Battery Treatment Operator (ABTO) status.
Improvement programme	<p>Based on the information on the application, we consider that we need to impose an improvement programme.</p> <p>We have imposed an improvement programme to ensure that the operator achieves the qualification from wamitab for the high risk tier Hazardous Waste Treatment qualification but are not currently qualified. The operator has demonstrated that they are registered with wamitab for the high risk tier Hazardous Waste Treatment qualification but are not currently qualified.</p> <p>Some waste is stored outside of the main building under cover, an</p>

Aspect considered	Decision
	improvement condition is included for the operator to demonstrate that weather proof buildings constructed for the storage of waste allow no water ingress and that the discharge to sewer is clean surface water only.
Emission limits	We have decided that emission limits are not required in the permit.
Reporting	We have specified reporting in the permit.
Operator competence	
Management system	<p>There is no known reason to consider that the operator will not have the management system to enable it to comply with the permit conditions.</p> <p>The decision was taken in accordance with the guidance on operator competence and how to develop a management system for environmental permits.</p>
Technical competence	<p>Technical competence is required for activities permitted.</p> <p>The operator is registered with an agreed scheme and IC1 is included to ensure membership.</p> <p>We are satisfied that the operator is technically competent.</p>
Relevant convictions	<p>The Case Management System has been checked to ensure that all relevant convictions have been declared.</p> <p>No relevant convictions were found. The operator satisfies the criteria in our guidance on operator competence.</p>
Financial competence	There is no known reason to consider that the operator will not be financially able to comply with the permit conditions.
Growth Duty	
Section 108 Deregulation Act 2015 – Growth duty	<p>We have considered our duty to have regard to the desirability of promoting economic growth set out in section 108(1) of the Deregulation Act 2015 and the guidance issued under section 110 of that Act in deciding whether to grant this permit.</p> <p>Paragraph 1.3 of the guidance says:</p> <p>“The primary role of regulators, in delivering regulation, is to achieve the regulatory outcomes for which they are responsible. For a number of regulators, these regulatory outcomes include an explicit reference to development or growth. The growth duty establishes economic growth as a factor that all specified regulators should have regard to, alongside the delivery of the protections set out in the relevant legislation.”</p> <p>We have addressed the legislative requirements and environmental standards to be set for this operation in the body of the decision document above. The guidance is clear at paragraph 1.5 that the growth duty does not legitimise non-compliance and its purpose is not to achieve or pursue economic growth at the expense of necessary protections.</p> <p>We consider the requirements and standards we have set in this permit are reasonable and necessary to avoid a risk of an unacceptable level of</p>

Aspect considered	Decision
	pollution. This also promotes growth amongst legitimate operators because the standards applied to the operator are consistent across businesses in this sector and have been set to achieve the required legislative standards.

Consultation

The following summarises the responses to consultation with other organisations, our notice on GOV.UK for the public and the way in which we have considered these in the determination process.

Responses from organisations listed in the consultation section

Response received from
Stafford Borough Council
Brief summary of issues raised
<p>Comments are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site plans in document FIRE PREVENTION PLAN for Blancomet Recycling UK Limited are not available page 27 onwards, please can these be supplied. • There is a noise sensitive receptor area at Brooms Park caravan park, for operations particularly after 6pm and in especially for (external) vehicle reversing alarms, will noise controls be applied in the permit?
Summary of actions taken or show how this has been covered
<p>The FPP and draft noise conditions that are included in the permit were sent to the authority. No further comment was received.</p> <p>Condition 3.4 of the permit for Noise and vibration states that the ‘activities shall be free from noise and vibration at levels likely to cause pollution outside the site, as perceived by an authorised officer of the Environment Agency’. Under this condition the Environment Agency can also request a noise and vibration management plan which identifies and minimises the risks of pollution from noise and vibration.</p>

Response received from
Public Health England (PHE)
Brief summary of issues raised
<p>We recommend that any Environmental Permit issued for this site should contain conditions to ensure that the following potential emissions do not impact upon public health: fugitive dust emissions.</p> <p>Based solely on the information contained in the application provided, PHE has no significant concerns regarding risk to health of the local population from this proposed activity, providing that the applicant takes all appropriate measures to prevent or control pollution, in accordance with the relevant sector technical guidance or industry best practice.</p>
Summary of actions taken or show how this has been covered
<p>No action taken - A Dust Management Plan was submitted with the application and is referenced in the operation techniques within the permit.</p> <p>All processing takes place within an enclosed building with self closing doors, the catalytic converter processing takes place in an enclosed area and local exhaust ventilation (LEV) is used in the processing areas. The LEV is fitted with HEPA filters and discharges within the building. Industrial vacuums are used at daily clean down in our processing area for collection of any dust that the LEV has not managed to capture.</p>

Representations from local MP, assembly member, councillors and parish/town community councils – N/A - not consulted

Representations from community and other organisations – N/A, not consulted

Representations from individual members of the public. – N/A, not consulted

Conditions where the consent of another person is required – N/A